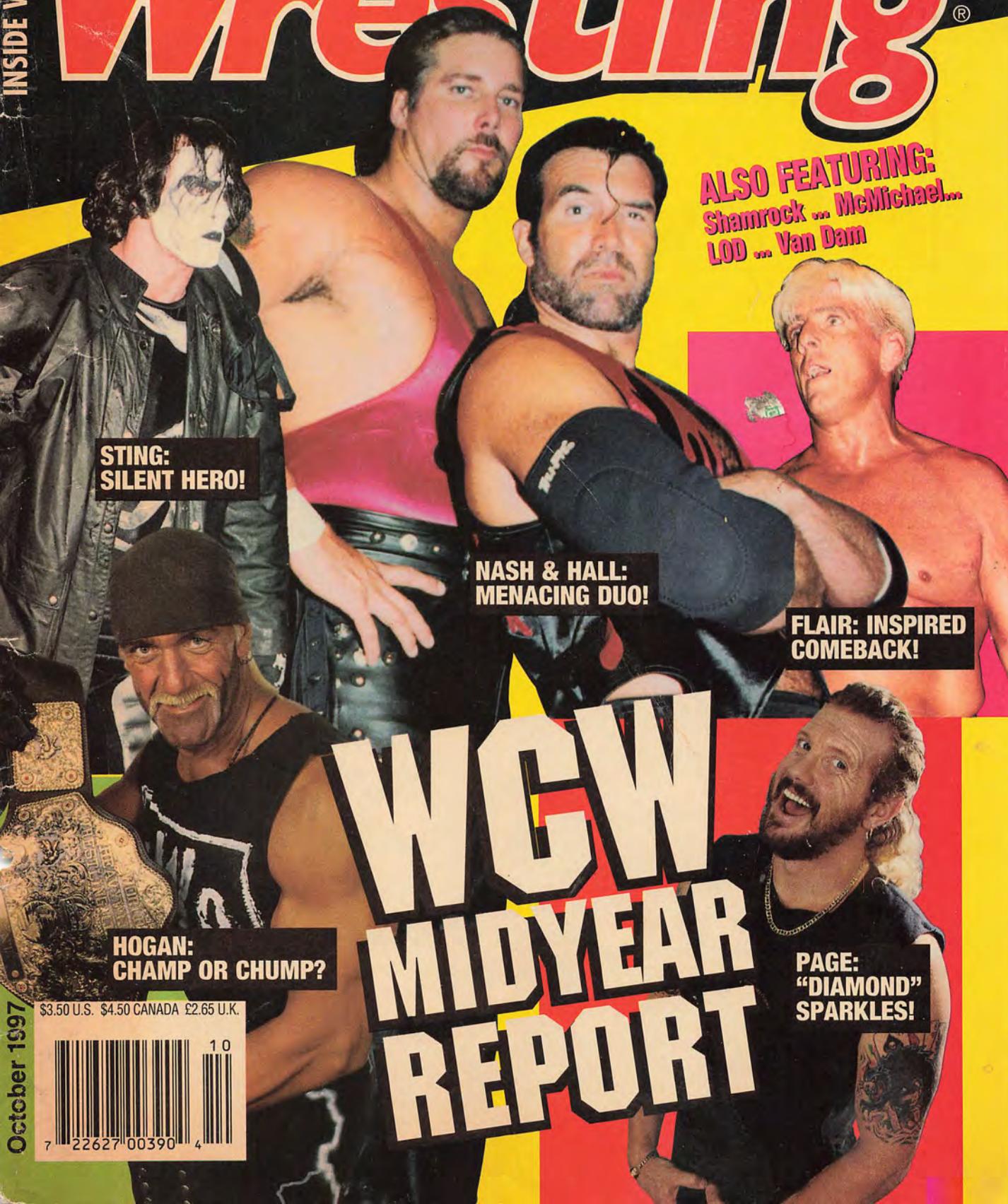


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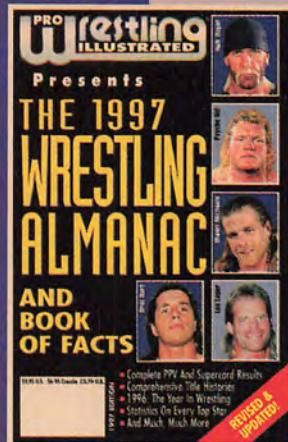
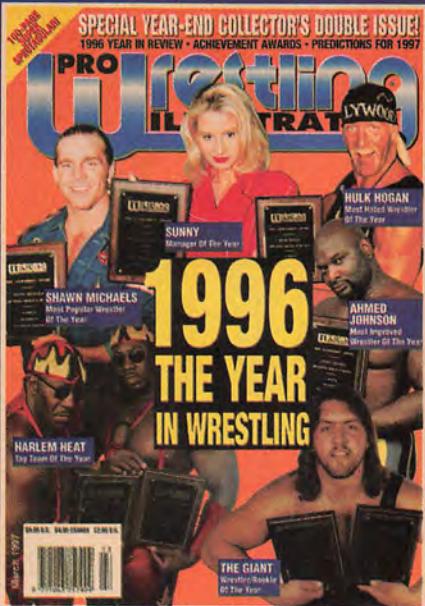
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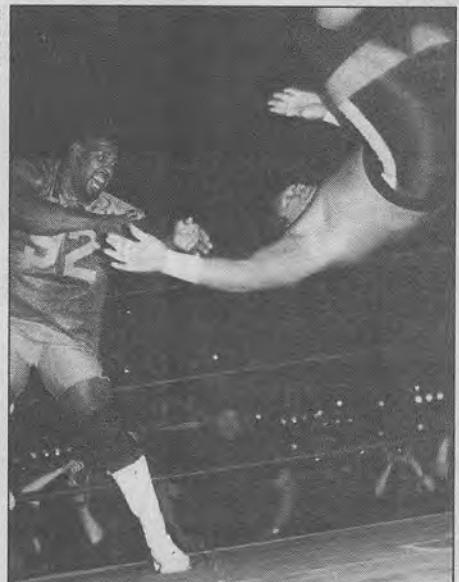
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Sincerely Yours

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Marc Mero and Sable gave a lot of similar answers when we asked them a series of personal questions recently. Reader Virginia Arlen was surprised by that, but she looks forward to seeing them back in the ring together.

ANSWERS AND QUESTIONS

I was amazed to see just how similarly Marc Mero and Sable answered your questions ("Revealed! Top Stars Answer Your Most Personal—And Offbeat—Questions!" July 1997). They seem to be well-suited for each other. I find it remarkable that many of their answers are even the same. They both are caring people who would probably do anything to help out someone in need.

I was surprised that they both included the Bible as the book that made the biggest impression on them. In this day and age when it seems as if people cheer the bad guys and degrade the good, I think it is brave of them to admit their religious convictions.

I wish Marc a speedy recovery from his knee surgery and a triumphant return to the ring. I hope he will have Sable at his side, because she is perfectly suited to be his manager.

VIRGINIA ARLEN
Mobile, AL

I can't believe no one asked Beulah McGillicutty to her senior prom. If I was around, I would have taken her! I bet all those guys she went to school with are now kicking themselves for not asking! She's become such a prominent valet in pro wrestling that it is hard to think of her as a girl no one would have asked to the prom. I'm sure Tommy Dreamer would have been proud to take her if he would have been around then.

I think she should take Dreamer to her high school class reunion to show her male classmates what a real man looks like. Dreamer's a man that isn't afraid to ask for what he really wants.

MIKE TURNER
Fort Lauderdale, FL

CASE IN POINT

Steve McMichael contends that he is working hard to become as good at wrestling as he was at football, but if that is the case, why did



Reggie White might have beaten Steve McMichael at Slamboree had "Mongo" not bashed him with his steel briefcase. Reader Scott Veach says this just proves that McMichael still has a lot to learn.

he have to resort to using his steel briefcase to defeat Reggie White at Slamboree? ("No Horsing Around—Steve McMichael: 'I've Never Worked Harder At Anything In My Life,'" July 1997). McMichael may think that he has come a long way with his wrestling training, but that match proved that he still has a lot to learn, especially about overconfidence. Reggie White also proved that McMichael has a lot to learn in the ring both technically and mentally.

I think McMichael disgraced this great sport at Slamboree. Had he not used that steel briefcase, he probably would have lost to a man who hadn't wrestled a single match before. But what happened wasn't a surprise to me. I figured "Mongo" would do something stupid like using that steel briefcase to get the win. "Mongo" needs to realize that he has been trained by some of the best wrestlers in the world, The Four Horsemen, and he should have

relied upon the skills he has gained through his training and experience. Instead, he probably panicked when White matched a few of his holds. He resorted to his trusty case as a finishing move because he wasn't sure if he'd be able to beat White by ability alone.

SCOTT VEACH
Toms River, NJ

HELP WANTED

Someone needs to help Tyler Fullington stop obsessing about getting his parents back together so he can get on with his own life ("Tyler's Cry For Help! 'Help Me Get My Mom And Dad Together!' July 1997). My parents are divorced, so I know firsthand the pain you feel when you are dragged into court every other week for a custody battle. I learned that it is sometimes easier to accept that your parents just don't like each other anymore. That doesn't mean that they care any less for Tyler, and he needs to know that.

I hope now that Lori Fullington and Tyler have disappeared from Extreme Championship Wrestling and have gotten away from Raven, Tyler's life can go back to normal.

(Continued on page 70)



Young Tyler Fullington once again has a good relationship with his father, ECW's Sandman, but reader Nina O'Day wishes Tyler would forget about trying to get his parents back together.

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REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

By Stu Saks

We all know that the mainstream media for the most part ignores the sport of professional wrestling. From a wrestling standpoint, there's not much to read in your daily newspaper, unless you consider Dennis Rodman a wrestler, and that's a 6'8" stretch.

For a wrestling person, the best part of the newspaper is actually the business section. No, they don't run articles on the WWF vs. WCW warfare. Not directly, anyway. But there is stuff that is just as good—and has a huge impact on the WWF and WCW.

Take for instance an article that appeared in the *New York Post* on May 29. The headline read: "Seagram's Time-ly Escape Nets \$243M." *Seagram? That's the company that makes ginger ale. What does that have to do with wrestling?* Logical question.

Seagram does make ginger ale and several other drinks, but it is also a giant in the entertainment world. It owns Universal Studios and, until May, owned an 11 percent stake in Time Warner. That's where it gets interesting for us. Time Warner, of course, owns World Championship Wrestling. Next to Ted Turner, Seagram was the second-largest shareholder in the company. In selling half its stake at a time when Time Warner's stock was at a record high, Seagram was able to raise \$1.39-billion in cash and an after-tax profit of \$243-million on its four-year investment.

What will they do with that money? Well, stay with me and I'll get to that. In 1995, Seagram sold its 25 percent stake in DuPont to purchase 80 percent of the MCA movie studio (which later became Universal). One of MCA's holdings was 50 percent ownership of the USA Network. The other half-owner is the mega-giant Viacom. The USA Network, of course, is the sole national TV outlet for the WWF. The *Post* article speculates that Seagram will spend about \$1.7-billion to pay Viacom for the its half ownership of USA.

So there you have it. The second-largest stockholder in Time Warner (owner of WCW) sells off a load of stock to raise the cash it needs to gain full ownership of the USA Network (which at this point controls the fate of the WWF).

And you thought Dilbert was the only good thing in the newspaper.

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NAMES MA

AFTER RANDY SAVAGE punched J.J. Dillon on WCW *Monday Nitro* this June, Savage was ordered into a closed-door meet-



RANDY SAVAGE



THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR

The Ultimate Warrior's negotiations with New York's Ultimate Championship Wrestling have stalled; the two sides couldn't agree on money or a list of potential opponents for Warrior ... How's this for despicable: North American All-Star Wrestling's **Terry Golden** sneaked out of the bushes while **The Colorado Kid** was getting ready to donate blood at an outdoor blood drive and beat Kid with a baseball bat

... **The Scorpion** has beaten **Maverick Buck** to regain the New Dimension Wrestling light heavyweight title ... **The Eliminators' Perry Saturn** will need major reconstructive surgery to repair the torn anterior cruciate and meniscus ligaments in his left knee. Saturn injured the knee during a three-way dance against **PG-13** and the **Dudleys** while attempting a front kick against **D-Von Dudley**. When Saturn's plant foot landed on a crutch (that had been brought to the ring by the interfering **New Jack**), the knee buckled. It is unknown how long Saturn will be out of action, but it could be as long as six months to a year. The fate of the ECW tag team title was unknown at press time.

ing during which he was given a verbal lashing by NWO head **Eric Bischoff**. Bischoff told Savage, "I hate Dillon as much as you do, but even though we're not with WCW, there are certain lines we do not want to cross, and you just crossed one of them."

Savage told Bischoff, "I don't give a damn," walked out of the meeting, and slammed a door in Eric's face.

Bischoff later admitted, "I cannot control Randy Savage, and I certainly do not like that. He's got to listen to me or we are going to have to make some adjustments" ... Now that he's back in control of **The Undertaker's** career, **Paul Bearer** has told the WWF World champion that he will re-evaluate their business relationship. In other words, he feels he deserves a larger cut of the money Undertaker earns in each match. "Because of all the pain he has caused me," Bearer said, "I deserve a lot more."

The WWF is planning to create both a light heavyweight and a cruiserweight division. Why both? ... **Bruce Hart** and **Jim Neidhart** are feuding with **Tommy Cairo** and **Marty Jannetty** in UCW. The hatred between Jannetty and Neidhart goes back to the days when Jannetty and **Shawn Michaels** teamed against Neidhart and **Bret Hart** in the late-1980s.

Rick Morton, who had been competing in Japan, has returned to the States to help his old **Rock 'n' Roll Express** partner, **Robert Gibson**, in his feud with **Bob, Steve, and Scott Armstrong** ... **Rockabilly (Billy Gunn)** says that **The Honky Tonk Man** is trying to get him a tag team partner, but that neither he nor Honky would consider Billy's brother, **Bart**. "The guy's too busy defending that Pennsylvania Championship Wrestling Americas belt every six months," Honky said. "We wouldn't want to offer him the spot and cut into his busy schedule."

"**Mr. Monday Night**" **Rob Van Dam** and **Sabu** were scheduled to team for several matches over a period of two weeks in Japan recently,



ROB VAN DAM

KIN' NEWS

By Bill Apter

but after a few of those matches had taken place, they changed their contracts and wrestled single matches instead. Then, following a few dressing room arguments, they decided to wrestle each other.

"I was carrying him in all our matches," Van Dam explained. "The guy should pay me his half of the purses for not pulling his weight. It was like wrestling in handicap matches."

Sunshine Wrestling Federation officials levied two fines on one card recently. First, **Joe Defuria** was forced to pay \$500 after he slugged referee **Les Mitchell** during a match with **Vampire Warrior**. Then Warrior and his wife, **Luna Vachon**, had to



VAMPIRE & LUNA

pay \$250 each for hitting referee **Bruce Owen** with a kendo stick during Luna's match with **Riptide**.

Sex and Violence was stripped of both the Midwest Championship Wrestling and Insane Championship Wrestling streetfight tag team titles when **Sexton Hardcastle**, one of the members of the team, hurt his shoulder during a match and couldn't continue. The titles were awarded to

their opponents, **Rick Matrix** and **Dirty T-ex**; the other member of Sex and Violence, **Joe E. Legend**, was able to beat Matrix for the ICW brass knuckles belt later. Legend, by the way, recently had roles in the TV shows *La Femme Nikita* and *Due South*.



BILLY TRAVIS

Billy Travis insists that in addition to being named the number-one contender to **Jerry Lawler's** USWA title, he has been offered a multimillion-dollar recording contract by a Nashville record company. "I turned it down because I don't want my music career to take me away from my wonderful fans in the Memphis area," he said.

It's rare that a death match ends in a no-contest, but a bout between **Carlos Colon** and **Chicky Starr** in the World Wrestling Council did just that. After **Victor the Bodyguard** handed Starr a chair, which he used to knock out Colon, **Ray Gonzalez** ran in and kayoed Starr with a chair. Since neither man was able to get up before the referee's 10-count, it was ruled a no-contest. The two have since signed for a stretcher match ... **Mike Diamond** and **Steve**

Rizzono, who wrestle mainly in California independents, have signed for several matches in the USWA.

Scott Putski will compete in the World Natural Bodybuilding Federation this fall. Scott and his father, **Ivan**, are also working on a workout videotape called *Powerthighs* that should be available to the public later this year ... **Rasta the Voodoo Mon** will wrestle in several tournaments in Austria's CWA during July and August ... **Psicosis** has signed with



PSICOSIS

WCW manager **Sonny Ono** ... **Johnny Ace** and **Kenta Kobashi** have won the All-Japan International tag team belts from **Toshiaki Kawada** and **Akira Taue** ... Veteran **Ronnie Garvin** has won the Tennessee Mountain Wrestling heavyweight title from **Chris Powers**. "My hands of stone are as lethal as ever," said the former NWA World champion. "Seems the older I get, the stronger I get. Just ask Chris Powers."

That's all for now. I'll see you at the matches! □

RETURNED HOME after last month's long trip to Tokyo, Japan, and decided that this month's column would have to be a little easier than the last one. No long trips. Forget about language barriers, crowded streets, and plane rides with two stopovers. Maybe a long ride on the information superhighway, if my America Online connection ever worked. Perhaps a trip down to ECW Arena for a harmless night of violence and mayhem.

As it turned out, my time was wasted in Japan. Unable to find out for sure whether Eric Bischoff had ever met with Keiji Muto, I got home and heard this message on my answering machine: "Dave, I hope you got the story. Keiji Muto just joined the NWO." The message was from Publisher Stu Saks, who had to approve the trip in the first place and justify it to the accounting department. What I wanted to do was take a shower, go to sleep for about 14 hours, then awake totally refreshed. What I had to do was call Stu and explain.

"Whaddya got?" Saks barked.

"Nothing. There weren't any good clues," I told him. "Maybe they met, maybe they didn't. I don't know."

"Well, of course they met," Saks said. "They're on the same team!"

"Well..."

"Well nothing. Go to Atlanta. Find out what happened."

"Now?"

"No, later," Saks said sarcastically. "Of course now."

"Not tomorrow?" I pleaded.

"No. Now."

"Marriott Marquis?" I half-asked, hoping he wouldn't mind me staying in a luxury hotel after such a long trip back from Japan.

ON THE ROAD

With Dave Lenker



Keiji Muto did a masterful job of fooling everyone into believing he had no interest in joining the NWO. Now he's officially with that group, but he's not too forthcoming with the details of his NWO deal.

"No. Travelodge."

"First class?"

"No," Saks shouted. "Coach class. Kiwi Airlines."

Great. Wonderful. At this point, I felt like calling Matt Brock and exchanging Stu Saks stories, but there was no time for that. Five hours later, I was unpacking my bags—same dirty clothing from the trip to Tokyo—and six hours later, after chowing down on a Snickers bar and a Coke, I was walking down Peachtree Street toward CNN Center, where I was hoping to meet with Muto.

I finally found him across the street at Olympic Centennial Park, wolfing down a Dove bar.

"Dave Lenker, INSIDE WRESTLING," I told him, flashing my press badge.

He looked up at me as if I was the last person on earth he wanted to see.

"What do you want?" he demanded.

"Just a few minutes of your time and maybe an explanation," I said. "Like, how come a few weeks ago you were denying ever meeting with Eric Bischoff, and now here you are a member of the New World Order?"

"Muto does not have to justify his actions," he said. "Muto only answers to the NWO now."

"What? But you were so adamant about not wanting anything to do with them."

"I was telling the truth," he said. "When people asked me if I would join the NWO, I said no, because at that time, my answer was no. I wanted

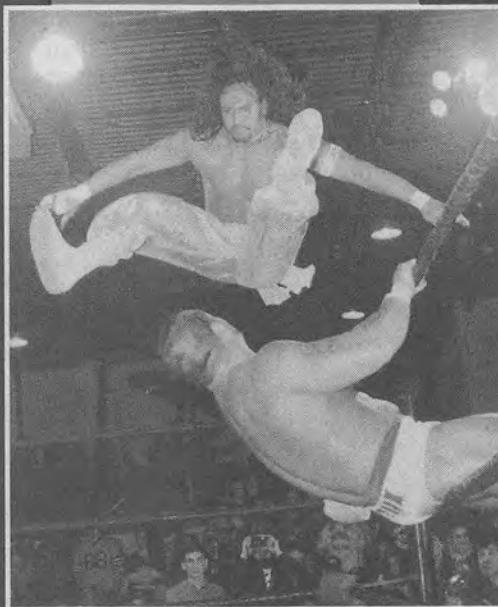
nothing to do with the NWO if they weren't going to offer the proper amount of money."

"When did you get the offer you were looking for then? When did you know you were NWO?"

"That is not of your concern," he snapped.

(Continued on page 72)

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Behind the Dressing Room Door

by David Rosenbaum

SOMETIMES, EVEN deadly serious and boring people like Pat Riley say some very interesting things. Talking about Chicago Bulls forward Dennis Rodman, the head coach of the Miami Heat said the following: "He is the most ridiculous thing to come along in the game ever."

That's not saying a lot, considering that the average NBA player is pretty unridiculous. Charles Barkley is a little ridiculous and Manute Bol looked ridiculous, but most sports have never had a character that even comes close to Rodman on the ridiculous scale.

Most sports, that is, except for wrestling.

Wrestling has a long history of ridiculous characters, starting with Gorgeous George back in the 1950s and extending all the way to Goldust in the 1990s. In between, we've had clowns, disco dancers, transvestites, fire-eaters, wolfmen, giants, midgets, men who walk around wearing leather and spikes, and Adrian Adonis. Not to mention Bill Apter.

So if somebody said about a wrestler, "He's the most ridiculous thing to come along in the sport ever," that would be enough to get just about anyone's attention. We'd look up, expecting to see a fat cross-dressing, makeup-wear-

ing, disco-dancing midget with hair all over his body and fire shooting out of his mouth.

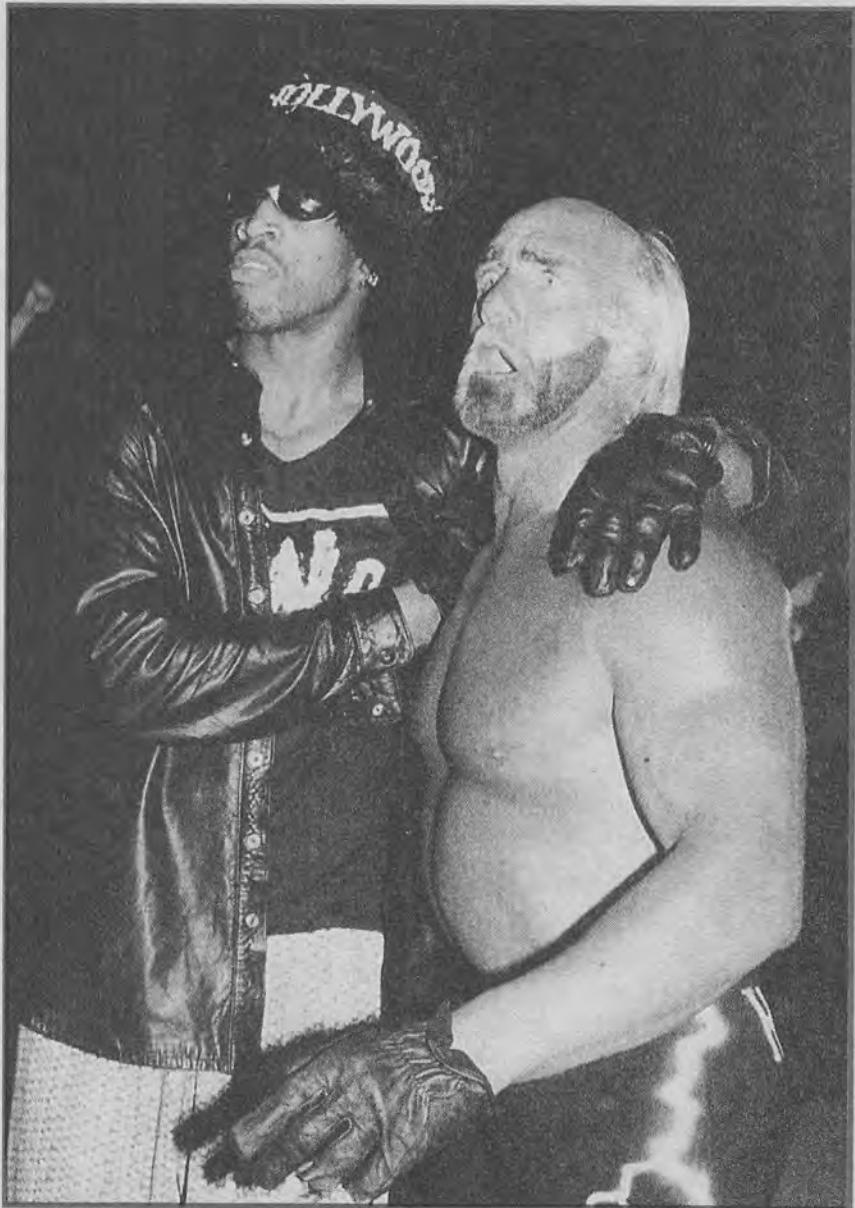
But now here's the unexpected answer to the expected question: Who is the most ridiculous thing to come along in the sport ever?

Maybe it's Dennis Rodman, who at press time was about to make his ring debut at WCW's Bash at the Beach. That would make Rodman the most ridiculous thing to come along in two sports ever.

Let's go down the checklist of ridiculousness:

1. Dresses strangely. Check. Rodman dyes his hair in rainbow colors, has been seen wearing prom dresses, spiked heels, and fishnet stockings, wears silver eye makeup and glitter all over his face, paints his fake fingernails, and has piercings all over his body. This makes Rodman as ridiculous as Goldust and more ridiculous than Gorgeous George and Adrian Adonis, who usually didn't wander further off the beaten path than housedresses, wigs, and a little bit of makeup.

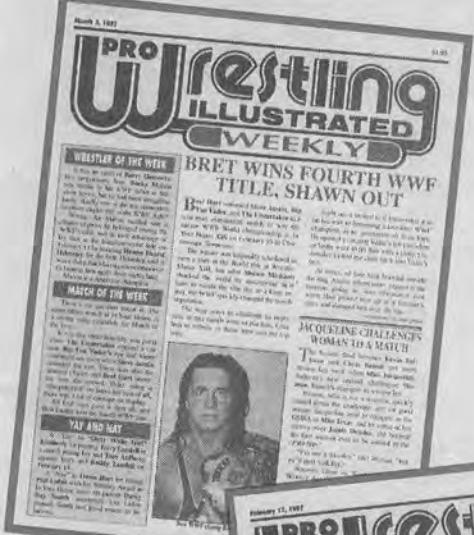
(Continued on page 74)



Hulk Hogan could probably convince a lot of different people to join the NWO if he wanted to, but he may have chosen the most ridiculous of all when he recruited Dennis Rodman, writes Dave Rosenbaum.

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the Insider

by Brandi Mankiewicz

(The opinions expressed in "The Insider" are those of Brandi Mankiewicz alone and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of anyone else on the staff of this magazine.)



We all knew all along that Goldust was really Dustin Rhodes and we had a good idea that Marlena probably wasn't the real name of his "director." But I really don't need to hear the man's life story told on WWF TV.

episode of her sitcom, she came out of the ol' closet. But that wasn't a door she opened—it was a floodgate. Out came Ellen herself, followed by a bizarre, eclectic mix of people, including Goldust and Mankind. Well, sort of.

What I always used to like about the WWF is what most people always hated—its unwillingness to acknowledge wrestlers' pasts. For the most part, I saw that as a service to the careers of the morphed grapplers. Take The Undertaker. Do you think "Mean" Mark Callous would be wearing WWF gold right now? Scott "Old Razor Ramon" Hall never got a break until he greased back his hair and sharpened his Hispanic accent. Even Kevin "Oz/Vinnie Vegas" Nash's wheel was reinvented and powered by "Diesel" fuel all the way to the top of the federation. But now the perceived deception has been replaced by emoting.

It started with Goldust. One minute he's clad in a wig and gold makeup and doing things most parents don't want their kids watching. The next minute, he is on television telling us what we've known about all along. He is actually Dustin Rhodes, the son of a son of a plumber.

Tell me something I don't know, Li'l Dust.

After spending about 18 months trying to make us forget the legacy that is Dustin Rhodes, Goldie decided to go the opposite route. He revealed his true identity to the two wrestling fans who have been living in a cave over the past decade. Then, as if that wasn't enough (and, gosh, don't you think it ought to be?), he wails in despair and gnashes his teeth over Daddy Rhodes and their lack of a relationship.

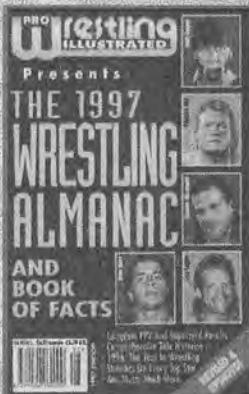
With that soul cleansing over, lo and behold, a subsequent edition of *Raw Is War* features yet another "freak o' the week" in Mankind. Once again, Clark Kent rips off the glasses and exposes yet another poorly kept secret. But he goes into more depth and doesn't just tell us about his years as Cactus Jack. He speaks of

(Continued on page 76)

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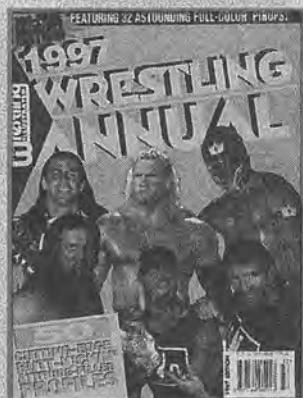
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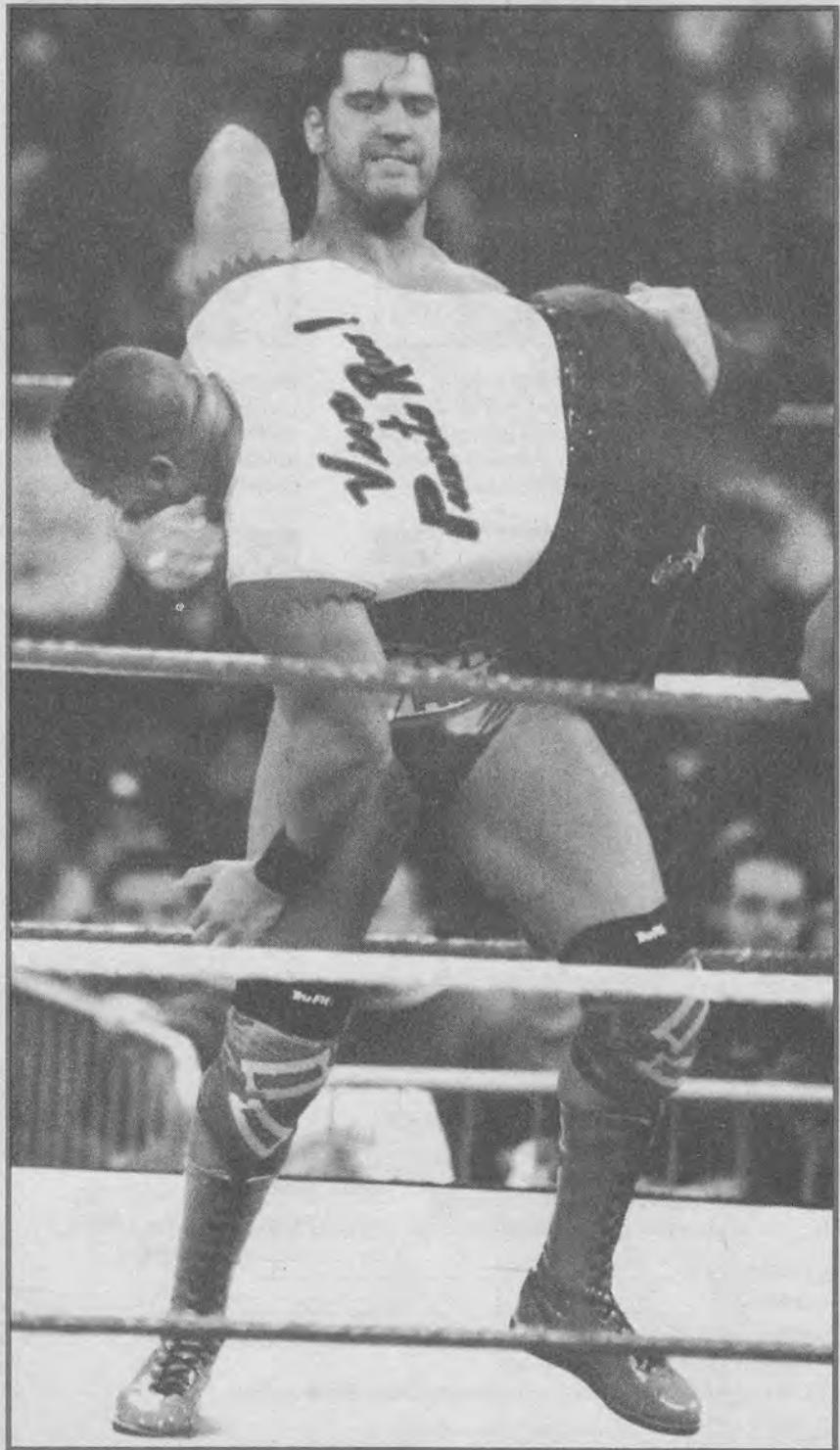
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ON

Assignment

By Liz Hunter



A lot of people were talking about The New Razor Ramon when he first arrived in the WWF and battled foes such as Savio Vega. But he wasn't in the WWF spotlight long; now it appears he's through with the "Bad Guy" persona.

LAST SEPTEMBER, WE witnessed one of the greatest hoaxes in wrestling history. It was back then that we saw the debut of The New Razor Ramon and New Diesel. Only the WWF left out the word "New" in their names. They were touted by Jim Ross as being better than the original Razor and Diesel, Scott Hall and Kevin Nash, who just happened to be wrestling in the rival WCW.

In spite of their detractors, they seemed to gain some credibility with each match. First in singles competition, both men won their share of key bouts. New Diesel even grabbed a non-title victory over then-Intercontinental champ Marc Mero. But perhaps their greatest achievements came when they formed a tag team, just as the originals were doing in WCW.

They even worked their way into title contention and soon they were challenging Owen Hart and Davey Boy Smith for the WWF tag straps. But just as they seemingly were about to peak, they fell right off of that tag team mountain. Months after their auspicious and controversial debuts, the duo of imitators were M.I.A. from the WWF. Amazing, but in just a few months they went from being top contenders in the WWF to fodder for "Where Are They Now?"

But they didn't disappear completely after leaving the WWF. The impostor tandem went on to compete in the USWA, Puerto Rico's World Wrestling Council, and AAA in Mexico. Don't ask me why, but I felt the need to talk with the pair recently.

They had arrived in Memphis to wrestle a match in the USWA, and I asked them to meet me at an airport bar for a two-on-one interview.

(Continued on page 77)



JUST FOUND!

BACK ISSUES OF THE ORIGINAL WCW MAGAZINE

Collectors agree that the early issues of WCW MAGAZINE were some of the most superb wrestling magazines ever published. Until recently, these magazines had been neatly stored in an air-controlled warehouse. Now, once again, they are available to the public!

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CAPSULE PROFILE

258

MANKIND

OKAY, SO NOW we know Mankind's real name isn't Mankind or Cactus Jack (big surprise there!)—it's Mick Foley. But that doesn't change the fact that this 6'4", 277-pound brawler is a little bit deranged ("I'd say a lot") ... A lifelong wrestling fan, he was trained for a career as a wrestler by Dominic DeNucci and made his pro debut in 1983 ... Cactus Jack wrestled mainly as a rulebreaker early in his career and used a Russian leg sweep as a finisher ... Had stints in the CWA as a member of Robert Fuller's Stud Stable and World Class, where he was a member of Gen. Skandor Akbar's stable ("I like to move around") ... Kevin Sullivan brought him to WCW for the first time in 1990 ... Had great feuds there with Abdullah the Butcher and Norman before returning to the independent circuit ("I appreciated the pain they caused me") ... Competed in IWCCW, the USWA, IWA, GWF, and UWF ... Wrestled Eddie Gilbert in three different stipulation matches in one night in Philadelphia's Tri-State Wrestling in August 1991 ("Never had so much fun") ... Returned to WCW and allied with Abdullah while feuding with the likes of Sting and Van Hammer, but that alliance

was short-lived, and they ended up feuding again ("Never figured that guy out") ... Perhaps the most memorable incident of his career took place in April 1993, when Big Van Vader power-bombed him twice on a concrete floor, nearly paralyzing him and leaving him with a bad case of

with Sullivan and lost a loser-leaves-WCW match to him ... Had a brief stint in Smoky Mountain during which he convinced Boo Bradley to break away from manager Tammy Fytch (Sunny) ("She's not a nice person") ... Had some extremely violent matches with Sabu once

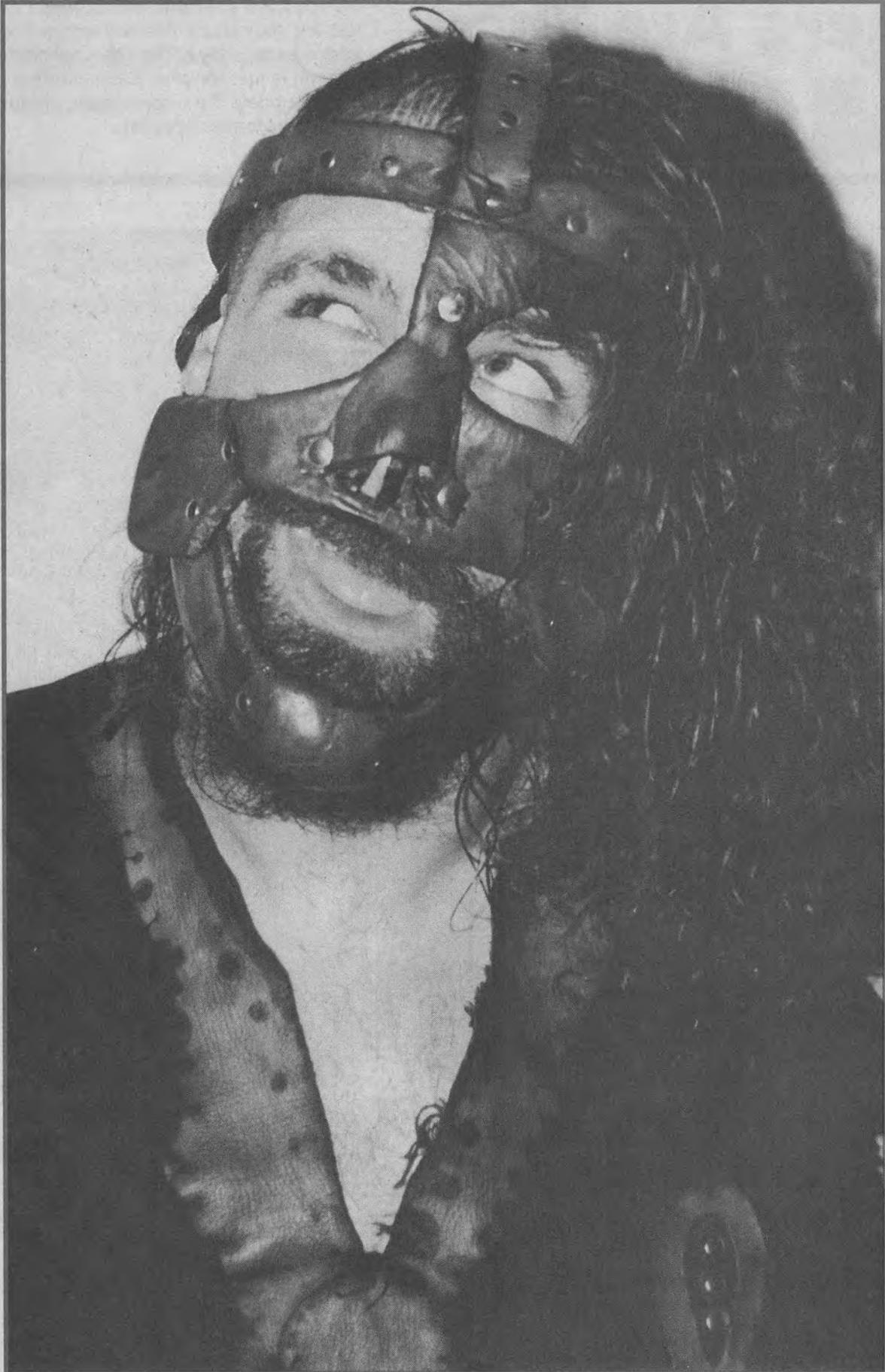
he joined ECW ... Also feuded with The Sandman, Terry Funk, and Tommy Dreamer while he was there, and prior to leaving that federation, he criticized the fans for demanding too much violence and bloodshed from wrestlers ("I can be a peaceful man, too, sometimes") ... Took on his Mankind persona when he signed with the WWF last spring and immediately targeted The Undertaker ... Stunned a lot of people by beating the man from the dark side at two pay-per-views last year ("It's hard to beat a dead man") ... Paul Bearer, Undertaker's longtime manager, betrayed his man and joined Mankind at SummerSlam ... Nearly beat Shawn Michaels for the WWF title at last September's In Your House ("I want-

ed to do it for Uncle Paul") ... Continued to hound Undertaker early in '97 and went so far as to burn his face with a fireball a few months ago ... Now teams semi-regularly with Vader and remains a threat to all WWF fan favorites ("And maybe a threat to myself, too"). □



Mankind uses his dreaded mandible clawhold on Shawn Michaels, a man he nearly beat for the WWF title last fall. He has spent much of his time in the WWF terrorizing The Undertaker.

amnesia ("I don't remember that too well") ... Returned to action in October of that year and lost to Vader in a brutal Texas death match ... Was one of WCW's most popular athletes when he teamed with Sullivan to win the World tag team title at Slamboree '94 ... Eventually had a falling-out



MANKIND

Where Are They Now?

Do you have a favorite wrestler who has left your area? Are you wondering where he is today? Then this special column is just for you. Each month we will update the whereabouts of four current or former wrestlers



ROBERT GIBSON

Gibson is now competing for All-Pro Championship Wrestling in Pensacola, Florida, where he still occasionally teams with his Rock 'n' Roll Express partner, Rick Morton. "I'm feuding with Steve, Scott, and Bob Armstrong," Gibson says. "Sometimes Rick comes in to help,

and sometimes I team with Carolina Kid." Gibson also has a wrestling school in Pensacola. "I'm training some top-shelf talent there," he adds. "Maybe some of 'em can help me get rid of the Armstrongs for good."



KEN LUCAS

Lucas was the first steady tag team partner of Rick Morton. The two men teamed in Amarillo, Texas, and after their split, Lucas wrestled in Texas, the Gulf Coast states, and for Mid-South. He's now retired and living in Pensacola, where he's involved

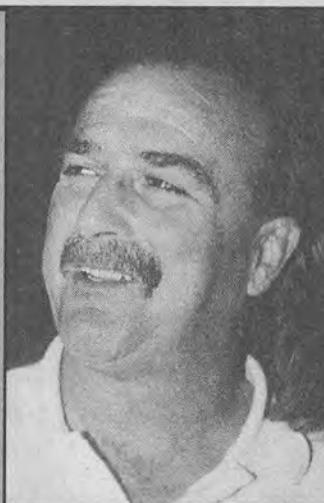
in the distribution of optical equipment. Looking back, Lucas views his feud with Jerry Lawler as one of his career highlights. "We had some bloody matches, and I remember almost killing his manager, Jimmy Hart, a few times when he interfered."



BARON VON RASCHKE

The Baron still wrestles on occasion in Minnesota independents, but he and his wife, Bonnie, devote most of their time to operating an antique business in suburban Minneapolis. "I love taking trips into the past by looking at relics from years gone by,"

Raschke says. Regarding his wrestling career, the 56-year-old still boasts that no one has a better version of the clawhold than him. "I could wipe out that entire NWO with my claw if they gave me a chance," he says.



JAKE ROBERTS

"The Snake," who lives in Florida now, took a few months off from wrestling recently, but he has since resurfaced in Mexico's AAA, where he's feuding with men such as Latin Lover, Canek, and Octagon. "Those guys, they use all these high-flying

moves and think they know how to defeat a legend like me, but they're finding out that's it's not so easy." Roberts has also formed an alliance with Gorgeous George III, who calls Jake "a genius ... wrestling's only true icon."

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NEWS FROM THE

AUBURN HILLS, MI
BY PETE HARRISON



MANKIND
VS.
PHINEAS GODWINN



Mankind has a strange sense of humor, but he must not like impersonations by other wrestlers. During Mankind's match with Phineas, the hog farmer sat down in the corner and started imitating Mankind's voice and movements. Fans enjoyed it, but apparently Mankind didn't. He grabbed Phineas with his mandible claw and choked him out for the submission victory. Afterward, Mankind picked up the limp hand of Phineas and waved goodbye with it.

OTHER BOUTS: Leif Cassidy pinned Bob Holly ... Hunter Hearst Helmsley defeated Goldust when Chyna interfered ... Crush beat Flash Funk ... Rockabilly defeated Jesse James ... Savio Vega pinned Rocky Maivia ... The New Blackjacks defeated Doug Furnas & Phil Lafon ... Faarooq pinned Ahmed Johnson ... Steve Austin & The Undertaker defeated Owen Hart & Davey Boy Smith by disqualification when Brian Pillman interfered.

CHARLOTTE, NC
BY MATT PIKE



JEFF JARRETT
VS.
DEAN MALENKO



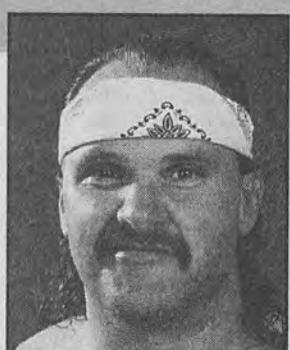
U.S. champ Malenko beat Jarrett at Slamboree when Steve McMichael refused to help his fellow Horseman. Early on, the two men traded headlocks, armlocks, and power maneuvers. Jarrett did well to avoid Malenko's Texas cloverleaf early, while Malenko repelled Jarrett's early attempts at applying the figure-four. At one point, Jarrett was tossed out of the ring. Debra McMichael went to help, but Steve McMichael threw him back in, saying he could win the match on his own. Malenko then used a power bomb, put Jarrett in the cloverleaf, and won by submission.

OTHER BOUTS: Steven Regal defeated WCW TV champ Ultimo Dragon to win the title ... Madusa pinned Luna Vachon ... Rey Misterio Jr. defeated Yuji Yasuraoka ... Glacier beat Mortis ... Meng beat Chris Benoit ... Rick & Scott Steiner defeated Konnan & Hugh Morris ... Steve McMichael pinned Reggie White ... Ric Flair, Roddy Piper, & Kevin Greene beat Kevin Nash, Syxx, & Scott Hall.

HAMLET, NC
BY BROCK CHANDLER



ITALIAN STALLION
VS.
GEORGE SOUTH



South was hoping to regain the PWF heavyweight title from Stallion in this match at the Armory, but Stallion's second, Madd Maxxine, saw to it that that didn't happen. Champion and challenger brawled throughout the match, exchanging a lot of punches and kicks. South tried to get some help from his second, Mama Maxxine (Madd Maxxine's mother), but every time he brought Stallion over to the corner for Mama to punch him, she refused. Finally, Madd Maxxine hit South with a foreign object and Stallion pinned him. Mother and daughter left the ring with Stallion, but they began fighting as they got back to the dressing room.

OTHER BOUTS: PWF tag team champions Flaming Youth & Masked Maniac defeated The Black Dragons ... Black Angel beat Wasted Youth ... Ripper beat Terry Austin ... Gladiator II beat Wasted Youth.

WRESTLING CAPITALS

WINSTON-SALEM, NC
BY ERIKA ROMER



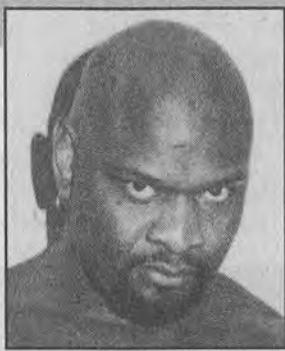
DALLAS PAGE
VS.
RANDY SAVAGE



NEW YORK, NY
BY MARIE ARCHIE



FAAROOQ
VS.
AHMED JOHNSON



HAZLETON, PA
BY TIMOTHY A. WALKER



NEW JACK
VS.
AXL ROTTEN



"Diamond" Dallas and the "Macho Man" have been pummeling each other every chance they get, and they are both showing some of the wounds they received in their battles. For this bout, Page had his ribs taped and Savage was limping. Page was in control most of the time, but he was attacked by several members of the NWO as he set up Savage for the "Diamond cutter." The referee awarded him the match by disqualification.

OTHER BOUTS: Steven Regal beat Alex Wright ... Marcus Bagwell defeated Scotty Riggs by forfeit when Riggs failed to appear for the match ... Rey Misterio Jr. pinned Psicosis ... Jeff Jarrett beat Ultimo Dragon ... WCW U.S. champ Dean Malenko defeated cruiserweight champ Syxx by disqualification in a non-title match ... Rick & Scott Steiner beat Public Enemy ... The Giant defeated WCW World tag team champs Scott Hall & Kevin Nash by disqualification in a handicap match.

Ahmed made it look like he was going to join the Nation of Domination when he came to the ring for this bout, as he raised his fist into the air and hugged members of the NOD. When he turned to Faarooq, though, instead of hugging him, he nailed him with a belly-to-belly suplex. That only made the NOD very angry. Later, while the referee was knocked out, Savio Vega repeatedly nailed Johnson with a chair, then rolled Faarooq on top of him so he could get the three-count.

OTHER BOUTS: Leif Cassidy beat Bob Holly ... Crush defeated Jesse James ... Henry & Phineas Godwinn defeated Phil Lafon & Doug Furnas ... Rockabilly defeated Flash Funk ... Savio Vega pinned Rocky Maivia ... WWF World champion The Undertaker defeated Mankind in a lumberjack match ... Hunter Hearst Helmsley (with Chyna) pinned Goldust ... The Road Warriors & Steve Austin defeated Owen Hart, Davey Boy Smith, & Brian Pillman.

New Jack won this wild brawl against Axl Rotten, but he needed his garbage can full of foreign objects to do it. New Jack started out by pounding Rotten with a huge piece of aluminum siding. Next they bashed each other with an unopened can of soup. New Jack had the advantage for most of the bout, but Axl did gain some momentum when they were outside the ring. In the end, New Jack came off the top rope with a chair and hit Axl on the head before getting the pin.

OTHER BOUTS: Little Guido pinned Chris Chetti ... Spike Dudley & Mikey Whipwreck defeated PG-13 when Spike pinned J.C. Ic ... B. Mahoney defeated Tracey Smothers ... Tommy Dreamer pinned D-Von Dudley ... The Pit Bulls defeated Chris Candido & Shane Douglas when Pit Bull I pinned Douglas ... Buh Buh Ray Dudley pinned The Sandman after D-Von & "Big" Dick Dudley interfered ... ECW tag team champs The Eliminators defeated Raven & Stevie Richards.



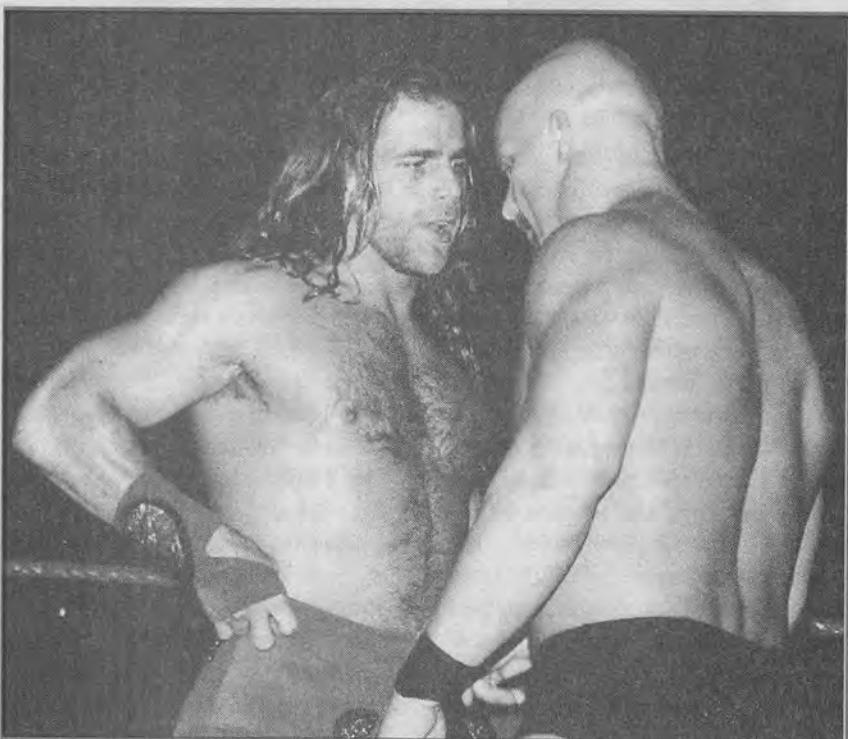
Matt Brock's Plain Speaking

Harder than nails, veteran wrestling reporter Matt Brock has logged more miles covering wrestling than any other journalist. Every month Matt will travel to the sport's hotbeds, reporting everything he sees without fear or favor

Maybe you'll remember that last month in this space, I wrote about two people not having to like each other to work together effectively. Well, it was proven here again at *Raw Is War*, this time with Steve Austin and Shawn Michaels beating Owen Hart and Davey Boy Smith for the WWF World tag team straps. Austin and Michaels don't like each other—far from it, in fact—probably because they're too much alike. This sport is full of people with huge egos, and they don't get much bigger than the ones belonging to Austin and Michaels. But they won for a simple reason: They're two of the most talented wrestlers in the world, and they also happen to be among the best tag team wrestlers of this generation. Austin was the main cog when he and Brian Pillman won the WCW tag belts back in 1993, and

EVANSVILLE, IN

anybody who thinks Michaels wasn't the key to The Rockers hasn't been paying attention for the past five years. Not that the past is always prologue, but that's just the way it is in this case. Of course, the question now is why Austin and Michaels were able to work together, and the answer there is surprisingly simple, too, as old as wrestling: "We both love to win," Michaels said. "That's all there is to it. If Austin couldn't help me win, I'd want nothing to do with him." On the other hand, it's one thing when partners don't like each other. That's all right. It's another story when they have different agendas, which was the case with Smith and Hart. Smith wanted to retain the belts and defend them for a good long time. Owen seems more interested in teaming with his brother Bret. I'm not saying Owen lost this match on purpose, but let's just say his heart wasn't in it the way it should have been. And that's no way to deal with Austin and Michaels, who could be on top for a long time.



MICHAELS & AUSTIN

Something an old wrestler once told me—the grappler in question is dead now—and it made a heckuva lot of sense. You might not like the sentiment or where it's coming from, but believe me, it's as true as anything this reporter has ever heard in half a century of covering the squared circle: "Matt," he said, "wrestling and religion just don't mix. When I see a wrestler who's found the Lord, I see a wrestler who's lost his way around the ring." Harsh but true: Love thy neighbor and all of the stuff in the Ten Commandments doesn't work in wrestling, and the latest proof of that is Ted DiBiase. DiBiase had a good thing going as a manager in the New World Order, but now he's a born-again Christian and what used to be okay might not be okay anymore, at least by DiBiase's standards. A few times earlier this year DiBiase ordered NWO members to ease up the pounding on WCW wrestlers, and that didn't go over too well with Eric Bischoff, who wouldn't know a church steeple from a skyscraper. "The sport's about winning, not about crippling your fellow man," DiBiase told me. "If Bischoff's got a problem with that, fine, but it sounds like the problem he has is with himself." Maybe, but Bischoff and Hulk Hogan are the ones running the NWO.

WCW cruiserweight champ Syxx beat U.S. champ Dean Malenko in a match in which no titles were at stake, and to me that's always been like telling the crowd to stay home. No reason to show up. You won't see anything other than two men with nothing to lose and nothing to gain going at it half-heartedly in the ring. They know there's simply no sense in risking blood and bones when there'll be

COLUMBIA, SC

KNOXVILLE, TN



SYXX

more important matches down the line. Malenko said he was wrestling at full intensity because "I like beating Syxx," but how about this comment from Syxx: "He was trying harder than I was, and I still beat him." By the way, Syxx said he'd be happy to put his title on the line against Malenko's title, and Malenko said the same thing, but don't count on that happening at any time in the near future. Also on the card, the Steiners beat Jeff Jarrett and Ric Flair, which was no surprise because Flair and Jarrett had never before teamed. The Steiners are after the WCW World tag belts, and my money's on them. If I last that long.

Used to be that the only time I ever got a burning sensation in the pit of my gut was when Publisher Stu Saks called and told me I had to go to Japan to cover a match or get my column in a week earlier. Saks can do that to you, and Lenker's no better. Come

to think of it, Brandi Mankiewicz is the worst of the bunch. Called the other day and said, "Matt, you're late again." "Wrong, girly," I told her. "I'm a day early. And that's Uncle Matt." "Not when we're working," she said. "Not on your life." Speaking of which, and about that burning sensation, went to the doctor, the same one who put me on that damned low cholesterol diet a few years ago, and he suggested I go for some tests. "Nothing big," the doc lied. "Just some blood and sugar work and a few X-rays. There's something I'm not too sure about." Now, in this life, I've learned quite a few lessons. Never return a phone call from an old girlfriend. Losers never leave town forever. Doctors don't tell the truth. He knows something he doesn't want to tell me, and that's not a good sign. Not good at all, but we'll see. □

NEW YORK, NY

WWD HUMILIATES PG-13!

They expected to face Savio Vega and Crush. They got PG-13. But it doesn't matter to The Road Warriors, who only have the WWF World tag team championship on their minds

Poor Wolfie D! He had no idea he would be in the ring with The Road Warriors during this edition of *Raw*. He was clotheslined off Animal's shoulders by Hawk (opposite page, right) and was on the receiving end of a double-back-bodydrop (above). He never stood a chance.

By Dave Lenker

THEY THOUGHT THEY were getting the Nation of Domination's best, and so did everyone else in the crowd for the *Raw Is War* broadcast in Newark, Delaware. The announcement was

made early in the evening: The Legion of Doom would face the Nation of Domination in a tag team match later in the card. And who would Hawk and Animal face? Most likely Savio Vega and Crush, at least if the Nation had any intention of winning the match.

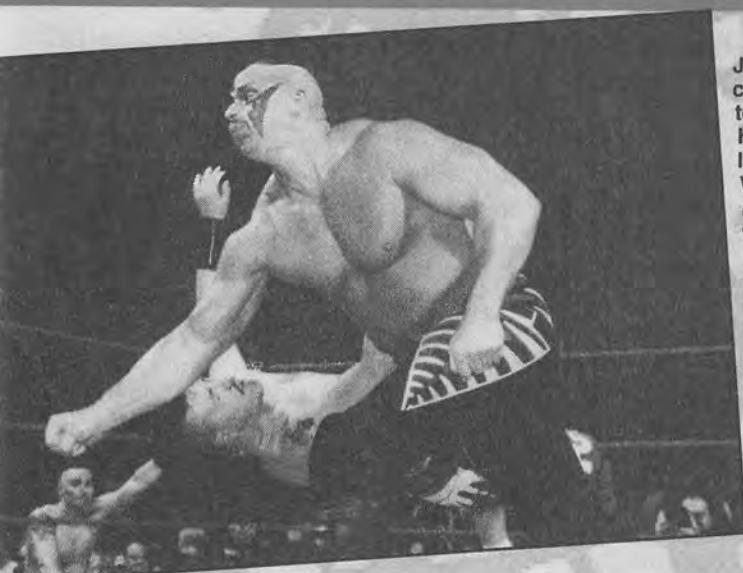
As it turned out, this one was a gimme, because the Nation had no intention of offering a challenge or lifting the Legion's stature in the WWF. While The Road Warriors impatiently stood in the ring waiting for their opponents, Crush, Savio, Faarooq, Wolfie D, and J.C. Ice stood on the ramp and sorted things out. And jaws dropped around the arena when

Wolfie and Ice, the team known as PG-13, were told by the other members of the group to make their way to the ring.

Forced to go to the ring, actually.

Now, there's nothing really wrong with PG-13. The team won 11 tag team championships in the USWA and was known as one of the toughest brawling tag teams on the independent circuit. But this was the WWF, and that was the Legion of Doom, who check in at a combined 562 pounds, most of it muscle and all of it angry. Wolfie D and J.C. Ice at a combined 471 pounds? Why, when Crush and Vega could at least compete with the Warriors at 572 pounds? That would be men against men. But this?

"DON'T
CHALLENGE
US WITH
LITTLE BOYS!"



J.C. Ice went crashing down to the mat when Hawk clotheslined him. The Warriors were angry that they were forced to waste their time against what they felt was a completely overmatched duo.

A small, smart team of mat wrestlers might have had a chance of overcoming the size disadvantage. PG-13 had no shot. Both members of the team were pinned simultaneously.

"They came after us like a couple of big men," Animal said. "I like their guts, but I don't think much of their strategy. They must've been crazy if they thought they could overpower us. Haven't they been watching us for the last 15 years?"

These days, who knows who's doing what in the Nation of Domination? The organization is on the verge of a total collapse and embarrassments like PG-13 vs. The Road Warriors will only accelerate its demise. The Road Warriors don't really care. Their only goal is winning the WWF World tag team championship, and PG-13 represented nothing more than a little bump in the road, the kind that a bulldozing duo like the Warriors wouldn't even notice.

"It was like the men against the boys," Hawk growled. "A complete waste of our time. When we saw them coming down the aisle, Animal turned to me and said, 'Brother, is this a joke?' Yeah, it's a joke. The Nation of Domination didn't have the guts to take us on. We wanted their men, but they gave us their B team. Let me tell you something, if you're gonna mess with us, don't challenge us with little boys!"

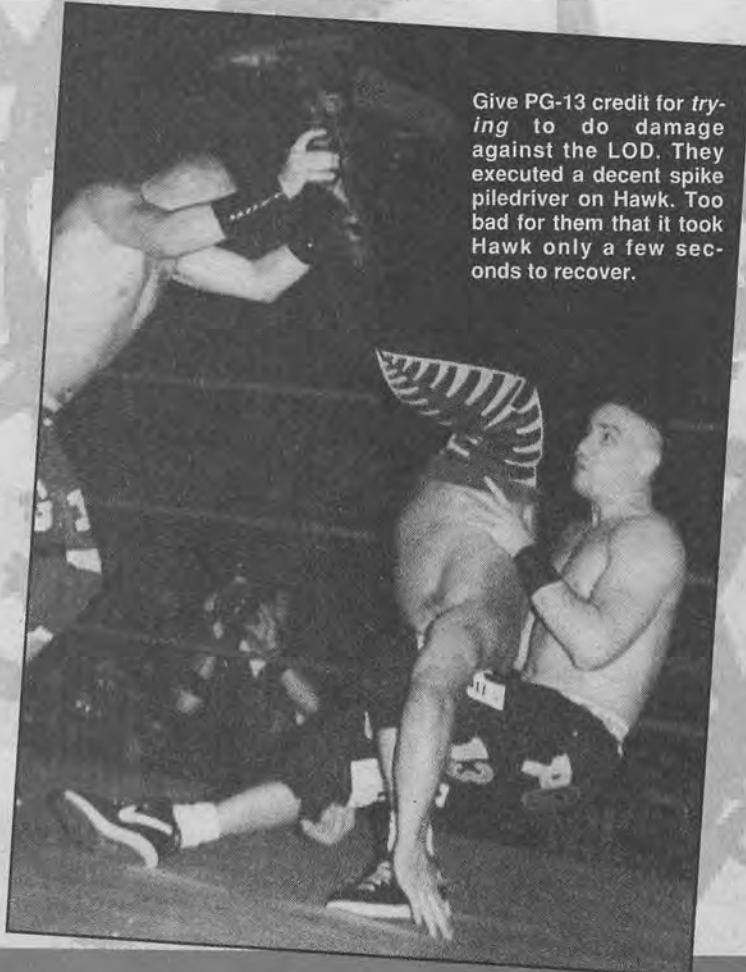
The match was a rout from the opening bell. After overcoming their initial shock, Hawk and Animal tore into PG-13 with a ferocity approaching rage, as if they had been insulted by the very sight of Wolfie D and J.C. Ice having the nerve to step into the ring with them. It's no wonder that when Faarooq ordered Wolfie and J.C. to wrestle, they looked like they had just been told to take a swim with a school of piranha.

The few offensive moves PG-13 tried didn't work at all. At one point in the match, Animal said to Hawk, "Why don't we just forget these punks and go after the real stuff!"

Decided Hawk: "We'll take care of these punks now and those punks later."

Naturally, PG-13 didn't see it that way. They did their best, and

that wasn't surprising. They have always been reckless competitors who get themselves into trouble by taking on too much. They love to go on the attack, but often sacrifice defense for the sake of offense. That's a foolhardy plan against a team like Hawk and Animal.



Give PG-13 credit for trying to do damage against the LOD. They executed a decent spike piledriver on Hawk. Too bad for them that it took Hawk only a few seconds to recover.

A stiffer challenge was posed the following week at *Raw Is War*, when Jim Neidhart and Brian Pillman—both former world tag team champions—lost to the Warriors by disqualification. That same night, Steve Austin and Shawn Michaels beat Owen Hart and Davey Boy Smith for the World tag team belts, ending a title reign that lasted about eight months.

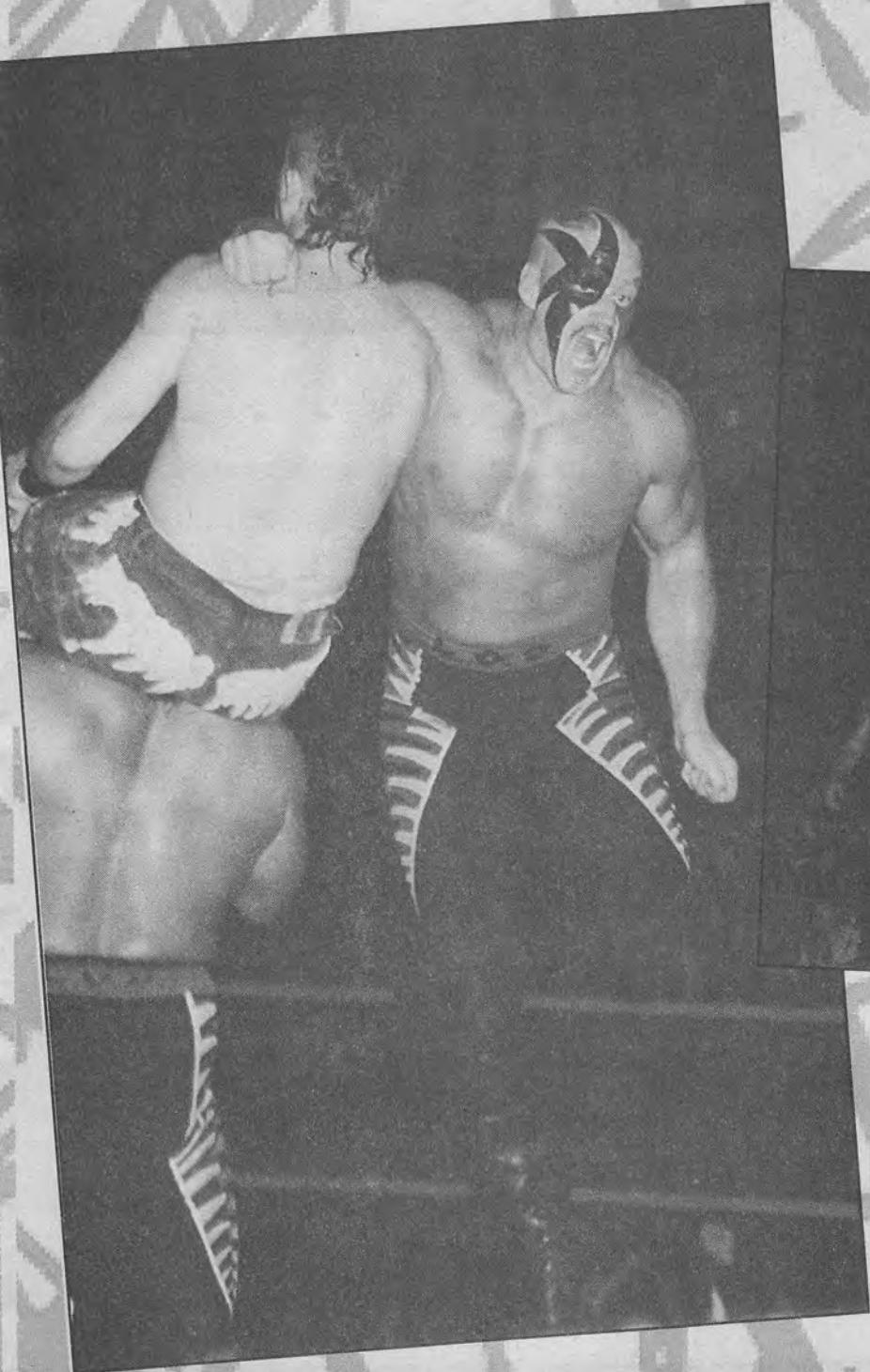
That changed the Warriors' focus from Owen and Davey Boy to Michaels and Austin, and they figure they have a big edge in at least one department.

"Michaels and Austin don't even like each other," Hawk growled. "They're bound to fall apart, and even if they don't, we can take them. The only reason we didn't beat Hart and Smith is

because they hid behind the DQ rule like a bunch of cowards. Michaels and Austin don't have the teamwork to do that. They're gonna try to take us on, and we're gonna throw them right back where they came from ... without the belts.

"I'm not saying Michaels and Austin aren't better than PG-13, but it doesn't matter. They're both gonna fall to the Legion of Doom. It's just a matter of who falls harder."

PG-13 has that one by a mile. They have already moved on to ECW and are making a run at the tag team title there. The Road Warriors have forgotten they ever existed. □



Animal easily knocked Wolfie off his feet (above), and once both members of PG-13 had been clotheslined off Animal's shoulders (left), the match was mercifully over.

MIDYEAR

ACTION
TALENT ROSTER
COMPETITIVENESS	..
BUSINESS
PUBLIC IMAGE
PAY-PER-VIEWS
ARENA SHOWS
TV PRODUCTION
ANNOUNCERS
FAN RELATIONS

REPORT

. . B+

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We presented grades for everyone in the WWF in the September 1997 issue of *The Wrestler*. Now it's time for us to take a look at WCW!

HAS IT ONLY been six months? It seems more like a year, doesn't it? So much has happened in WCW, and the NWO has created so much havoc that it's hard to believe we're only into summer. Perhaps it's time to take a deep breath. Sit back. Relax. And review.

Time for the WCW Midyear Report, a comprehensive review of the news that shaped the federation over the first six months of 1997.

So much happened. The Giant was booted out of the NWO, then spent the entire half-year exacting his revenge. Roddy Piper declared war on Hulk Hogan, and Ric Flair helped him battle the NWO. Flair returned to the ring in Charlotte after a nearly eight-month absence and received a rousing ovation. The Steiners won the World tag team belts ... or did they? That's not how WCW Senior Vice President Eric Bischoff saw it, and he returned the belts to Kevin Nash and Scott Hall. Then J.J. Dillon was called upon to restore order; his first act was to render Bischoff powerless. The U.S., cruiserweight, and TV belts changed hands. The NWO grew and grew. And Madusa renewed her feud with Luna Vachon.

Randy Savage returned after a brief absence, "Diamond" Dallas Page became a fan favorite, and Steve McMichael feuded with the Green Bay Packers' Reggie White. On the ridiculous side, NBA star Dennis Rodman signed on with the NWO.

Perhaps most importantly, WCW continued to dominate the Monday night ratings battle against the WWF.

The civil war continues: WCW vs. NWO. So far, the NWO is winning, but WCW is fighting back stronger than ever. Can WCW resist the challenge from within? Is J.J. Dillon the right man for the job? Can Bischoff regain his power? Those are a few of the questions for the second half of 1997. The plot line was established during the first half.

THE GRADES ARE IN...

They get an "A": Dean Malenko won the U.S. belt from Eddy Guerrero and defended it against some of the best wrestlers in the world ... The Giant failed to win any title, but dominated with victories in handicap matches. Still waiting for Hogan ... Rick and Scott Steiner would be World tag team champions right now in any other federation with any other senior vice president ... Roddy Piper wrestled infrequently, but should be



An "A" for Dean

WCW MIDYEAR REPORT

World heavyweight champion right now ... **Lex Luger** was consistently excellent.

They get a "B": Lord Steven Regal won the TV title when Sonny Ono's interference backfired ... **Syxx** cheated like crazy, but he has been cruiser-



Give Syxx a "B"

weight champ since SuperBrawl in February ... **"Diamond" Dallas Page** showed true courage by resisting the NWO, then challenging and defeating many of its wrestlers ... **Jeff Jarrett** did a lot of winning and a lot of interfering in other people's matches ... World tag team champions **Kevin Nash** and **Scott Hall** counted on cheating and Eric Bischoff to retain their belts ... **Steve McMichael** might be the most improved wrestler in the federation ... **Harlem Heat** showed some moxie.

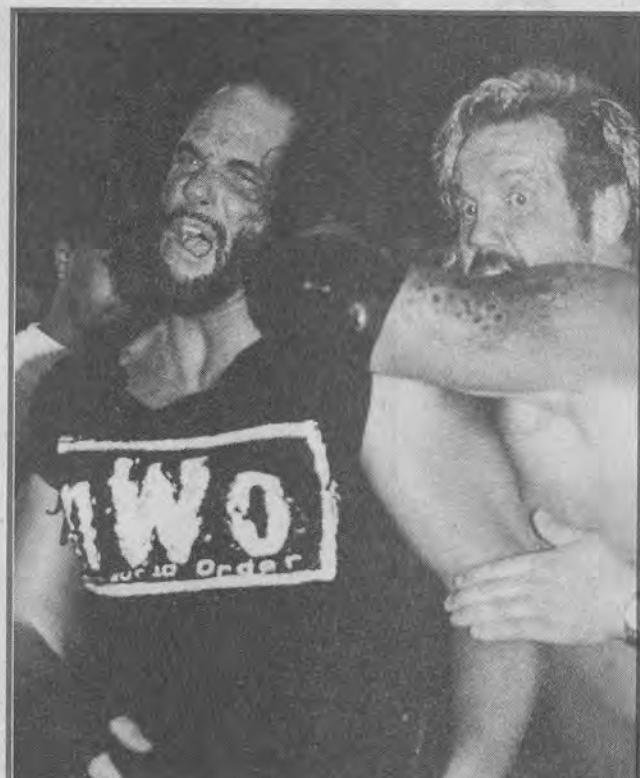
They get a "C": Spectacular Rey Mysterio Jr. finished the half-year by wrestling Malenko to draws for the U.S. title, but he struggled mightily early in the year ... **Marcus Bagwell** beat mid-level opponents ... **Ultimo Dragon** couldn't overcome his own manager and lost the TV title ... **Randy Savage** couldn't quite handle "Diamond" Dallas Page when they met in the ring ... **Chris Benoit** won some brutal matches

but took a lot of pounding ... **Kevin Sullivan** has been inconsistent ... **Meng** didn't establish any dynasties, but terrorized with his nervehold ... **Chris Jericho** showed occasional spark ... **Konnan** won a fair share of his matches but should probably get out of the Dungeon of Doom ... **Glacier** needs to test himself against the federation's best.

They get a "D": **Psicosis** impressed with some good wins, but was at least a cut below some of the other wrestlers ... **Alex Wright** doesn't know what to do with his natural talent ... **Public Enemy** got humbled by the big teams and even lost several times to High Voltage.

They get an "F": **Scotty Riggs** still has a lot of learning to do ... **Mortis** hasn't impressed much.

They get an "incomplete": World champion **Hulk Hogan** counted on interference to win the few matches he wrestled, then went away to make movies ... **Ric Flair** didn't return to the ring until May 18 ... **Eddy Guerrero** has been out since Uncensored with a shoulder injury ... **Keiji Muto**, also known as **The Great Muta**, only returned to these shores in May.



Savage struggled with DDP

WCW MIDYEAR REPORT

EXACTLY WHAT NOT TO DO WHEN THE GUY ON YOUR SIDE IS 7'4" AND WEIGHS 430 POUNDS

Hogan, irate at The Giant for his Starrcade screwup, booted Giant out of the NWO and ordered all members of the group to beat him up. Not surprisingly, Giant turned out to be one of the fiercest and most formidable enemies of the NWO.



The Giant elbows Hall

HOGAN VS. REALITY

HOW EVERYONE ELSE SAW IT: At Starrcade '96, Roddy Piper used a sleeperhold to defeat WCW World champion Hulk Hogan in a non-title match. Several times, Hogan tried to flee to the dressing room. The Giant's interference failed, but it probably wouldn't have mattered.

HOW HOGAN SAW IT (even weeks later): "Everyone saw how I destroyed Piper!"

"JUST CHECKING"

What was referee Nick Patrick doing when he kicked Lex Luger in the leg while Luger had The Giant in his "rack" at Starrcade? We found out later, when Patrick became the NWO's official referee and was the official referee for every match at the NWO Souled Out pay-per-view.

THE SINCEREST FORM OF FLATTERY

The New World Order was the dominant group in WCW during the first half of 1997, as well as the most frequently imitated concept in wrestling. The Nation of Domination debuted in the WWF, while the Blue World Order made an impact in ECW and a few former ECW wrestlers comprised the Extreme World Order in the Sunshine Wrestling Federation.

"I JOINED THE NWO AND ALL I GOT WAS THIS LOUSY T-SHIRT"

The NWO offered fists full of dollars as incentive to join the group, but when it came down to putting their money where their mouths were, Bischoff and company fell far short of promises. "Diamond" Dallas Page—one of the NWO's most wanted—was offered a T-shirt by several members on several occasions. Each time he accepted it, though, he proceeded to use "Diamond cutters" on whichever NWO members happened to be around. Later on, The Great Muta refused to try on an NWO T-shirt. Months later, the NWO must have come up with a much better offer, because Muta joined.

WOW MIDYEAR REPORT

YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'VE GOT 'TIL IT'S GONE

After Scott Steiner returned after being shelved several months with neck and back problems, the Steiners needed only one tuneup match, a victory over The Amazing French-Canadians, before beating WCW World tag team champions Scott Hall and Kevin Nash at NWO Souled Out. Scott pinned Hall for the belt, but WCW Senior Vice President—and NWO head—Eric Bischoff declared the win invalid two nights later because WCW referee Randy Anderson had come out of the crowd to make the three-count after Patrick was knocked out.



The Steiners looked sharp

UNITED WE STAND

Eddy Guerrero on The Giant fighting the NWO on his own: "He's making a mistake. If we're gonna beat the NWO, we have to put aside our egos and unite."

Terry Taylor, who came out of retirement: "This NWO has gotten me so worked up that I feel like I have to get back into top form so I can lend support to WCW if they need me."

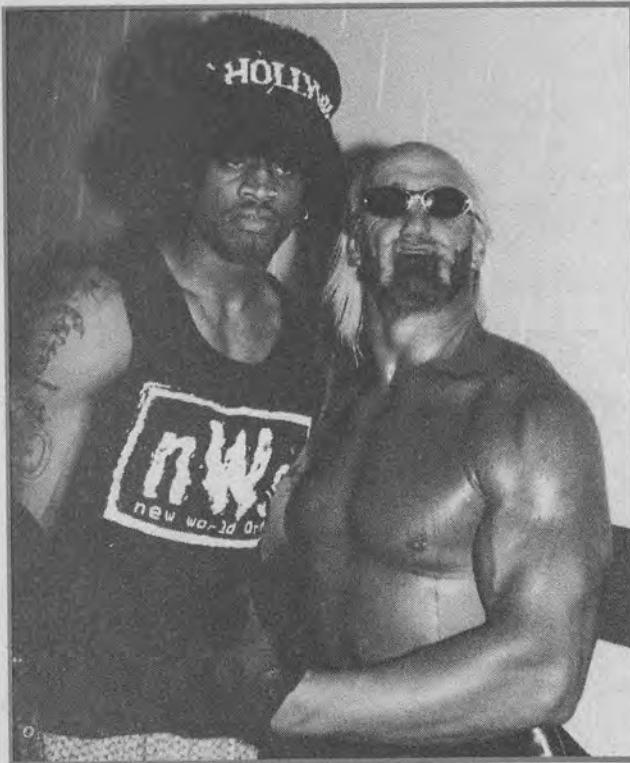
IS THAT AN EARTHQUAKE OR JUST THE SOUND OF EVERYONE SHAKING IN THEIR SHOES?

After a brief but successful tour of Japan, the team of Scotty Riggs and Chris Jericho said they might take a run at the WCW World tag team title. It never happened.

IT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED SOONER, BUT BISCHOFF HAD TO FIND ROOM IN THE NWO'S BUDGET FOR EARRINGS, HAIR DYE, AND TATTOOS

The NWO reached far outside of the ring to sign offbeat Chicago Bulls forward Dennis Rodman, who has become notorious for his violent behavior on the court and his "look-at-me" behavior off the court. "Dennis Rodman is perfect for the NWO, man," Hogan said. "He doesn't care what people think about him. He does his own thing." Said Miami Heat coach Pat Riley after Rodman—perhaps preparing for his ring debut—was called for technical fouls in 12 consecutive playoff games: "He is the most ridiculous thing to come along in the game ever." In Rodman's first appearance as a member of the NWO, he spray-painted the back of Lex Luger at the end of Uncensored.

WCW MIDYEAR REPORT



Rodman and Hogan

BETWEEN FRIENDS?

Spring Stampede was noteworthy for the arrest of Scott Steiner, who struck a police officer who was attempting to prevent him from entering Kevin Nash's dressing room at the Coliseum in Tupelo, Mississippi. But the real highlights were several squabbles between NWO members: First, Ted DiBiase told Kevin Nash to stop hurting Rick Steiner. Then referee Nick Patrick walked away from the match. Finally, Eric Bischoff ordered Randy Savage to not strike Kimberly. Said Hogan, who was away making movies: "They're falling apart without me. They need their leader."

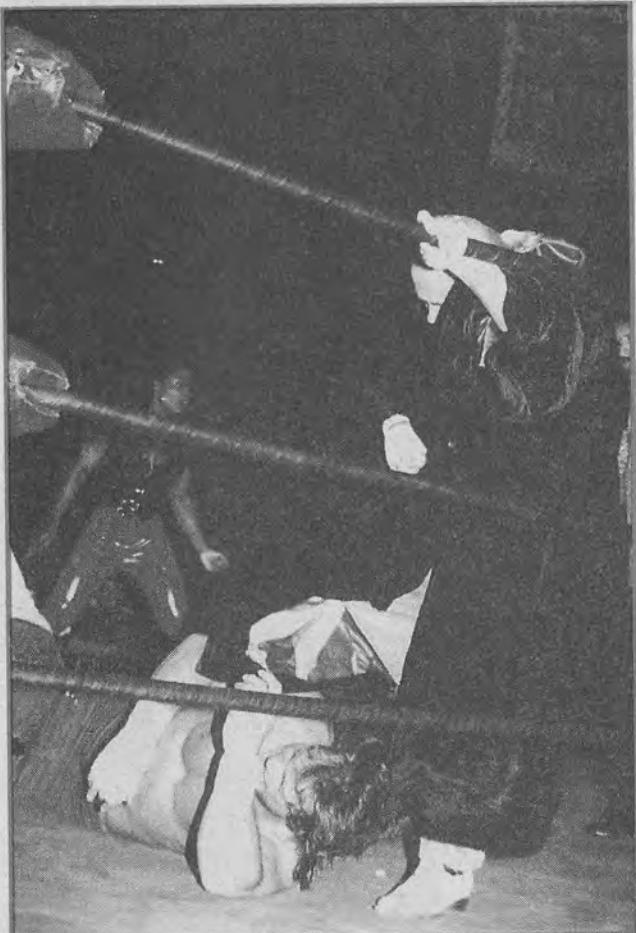
HEY, HULK, ABOUT THAT "QUALITY OF OPPOSITION" RATING ...

Hulk Hogan was humiliated when he got cleanly pinned by Jacques Rougeau in a non-title match in

Montreal on April 11. "A one-in-a-million shot," Hogan complained. But Rougeau never asked for another 999,999 matches against "Hollywood"; all he wanted was one title shot, and he didn't get that.

A FEUD THAT GOT TOO PERSONAL

Kevin Sullivan and Chris Benoit had some unbelievably intense falls-count-anywhere matches early in '97, but their feud took a bizarre turn when Sullivan brought his old friend Jacquelyn (a.k.a. Miss Texas) to WCW. She proceeded to manhandle many of Sullivan's preliminary opponents when he threw them out of the ring at her feet. Jacquelyn challenged Woman, who was once very close to Sullivan and is now Benoit's manager, to a match, but Woman wise-



Sullivan vs. Benoit

WCW MIDYEAR REPORT

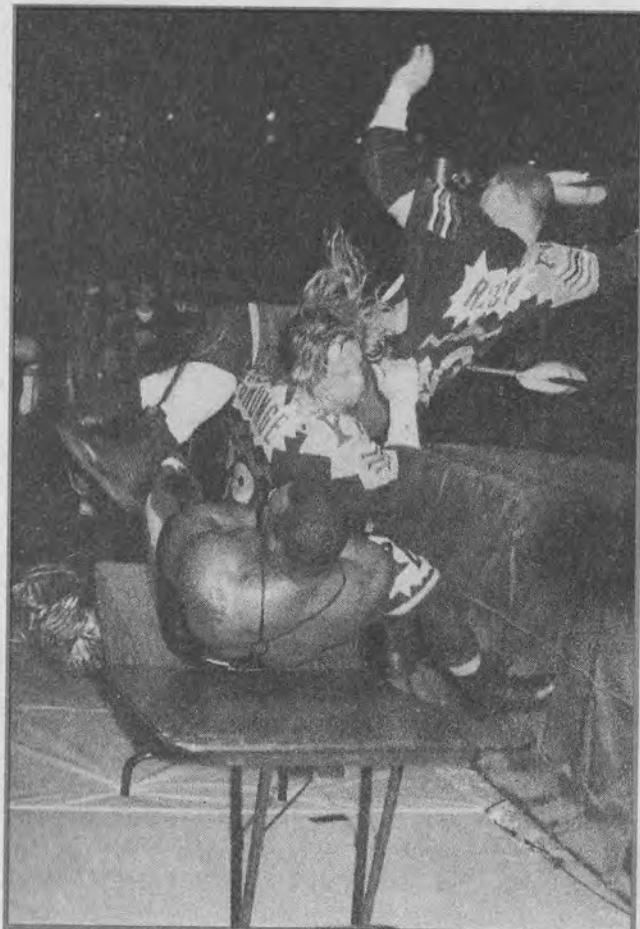
ly declined. The situation got even more complicated when Sullivan and Jacquelyn began arguing. With Kevin on sabbatical from WCW at press time, Jacquelyn's status was uncertain.

JUST IN CASE THERE WAS ANY DOUBT ...

After months of silence, Sting made it painfully clear where he stood in the war between WCW and the NWO when he attacked Scott Hall, Kevin Nash, Randy Savage, and Hulk Hogan with baseball bats at Uncensored. The bat-wielding "Stinger" took a few more swings in May when Hogan and Eric Bischoff forced the impostor Sting to bow at Hogan's feet. He catapulted down from the ceiling and showed the world that the real Sting won't have anything to do with the NWO. But he still isn't talking.



Sting drops Hogan



Public Enemy "tables" Booker T

THE BIDDING STARTS AT ONE DOLLAR

After having their contract renewed by WCW, Rocco Rock of Public Enemy gloated, "Me and Johnny Grunge are WCW's most prized commodity. Those jerks finally realized it."

THAT'LL TEACH HIM NOT TO HELP ANYONE

Prince Iaukea saved Rey Misterio Jr. from an attack by Lord Steven Regal on April 7. But the injuries suffered by Iaukea in the brawl contributed to him losing the WCW TV title to Ultimo Dragon later in the card.

WCW MIDYEAR REPORT



Dragon and Ono

ONO KEPT TELLING HIM BEFORE THE MATCH, "DON'T SHAKE HAND! DON'T SHAKE HAND!"

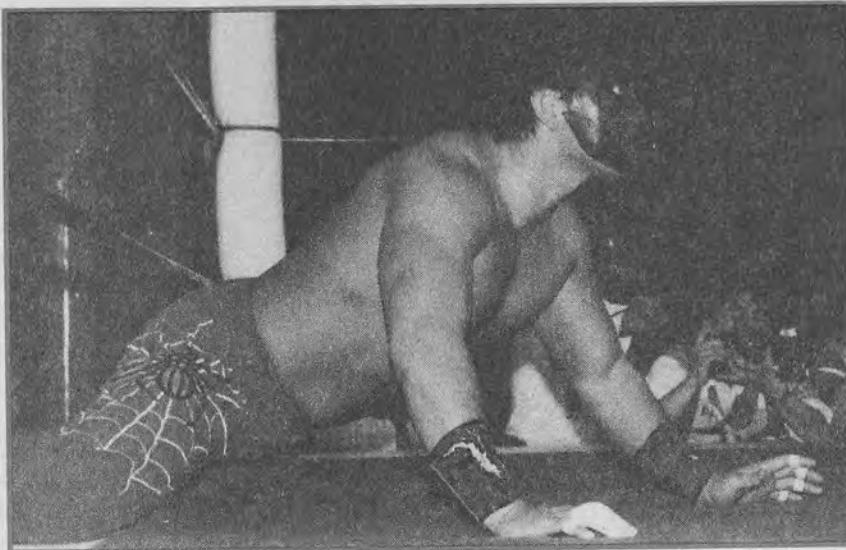
Ultimo Dragon fell for one of the oldest tricks in the book when Dean Malenko offered to shake his hand before a *Nitro* match, then clotheslined him to the ground. Dragon won by DQ when Malenko refused to stop choking him, but that was of little consolation to manager Sonny Ono, who complained, "Malenko is a cheater."

AIN'T NOTHING LIKE HIDING IN HULK HOGAN'S SHADOW

It's one thing to make a comeback, but why return to the ring if you have no shot at winning the World title? That was the big question for Randy Savage, who returned to WCW in late-January and joined the NWO in late-February. Hogan, the World champion who loves having top contenders on his side, complimented Savage for knowing "NWO is the only way to go," but even Savage didn't seem to know in which direction he was headed. He then seriously injured his ankle in a match with Dallas Page at Spring Stampede.

"NO! NO! NO! A THOUSAND TIMES, NO! ... BUT A THOUSAND AND ONE TIMES? WELL, MAYBE YES!"

For months, Japanese star Keiji Muto denied rumors that he had met with NWO head Eric Bischoff and was considering joining the organization. He refused to even wear an NWO T-shirt and was said to be on the verge of joining Sonny Ono's group, or even the Steiners for a war against the NWO. "I was



Keiji Muto



MIDYEAR REPORT

contacted by Mr. Bischoff, but I refused to even meet with him," Muto claimed. "Their actions disgust me." Apparently, it was a brief sickness. The wrestling world was shocked in mid-May when Muto, who was brought back to WCW by Ono, joined the NWO.

IT WASN'T EXACTLY LIKE WYATT EARP RIDING INTO TOWN AND ARRESTING ALL THE BAD GUYS

With the NWO out of control and threatening to take over the federation, WCW called upon former bad guy manager J.J. Dillon—one of the founding fathers of The Four Horsemen—to become chairman of the Executive Committee. Dillon, who during his managerial days had a reputation for breaking the rules constantly, immediately started to enforce them by stripping Senior Vice President Eric Bischoff of his authority and demanding that the NWO "play by the rules of WCW" or risk being banned from WCW TV. Bischoff's eloquent response to Dillon: "Bite me!"



J.J. Dillon

THEY BUY IT FOR THE ARTICLES

"Macho Man" Randy Savage and Elizabeth verbally attacked Kimberly during an interview at Uncensored. They berated her for a pictorial of her and husband "Diamond" Dallas Page in *Playboy's Nude Celebrities*. The public reunion of Kimberly and Dallas didn't go off too well, as Kimberly stumbled from the dressing room area crying and covered with spray paint, then watched in horror as Savage spray-painted her husband. Page had to wonder later if he would have been better off keeping his marriage to Kimberly a secret.

HEY, REGGIE, THEY DON'T HAVE STEEL BRIEFCASES IN THE SUPER BOWL, DO THEY?

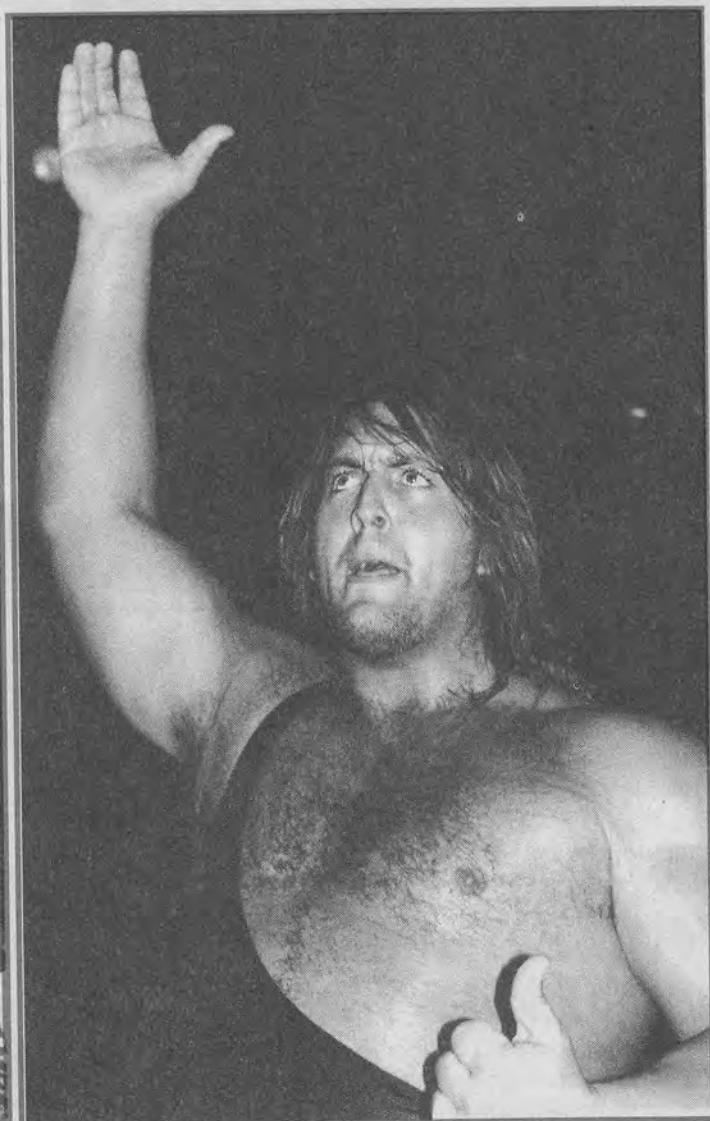
After gallantly accepting Steve McMichael's challenge, Green Bay Packers star Reggie White quickly discovered the perils of wrestling when McMichael hit him with a briefcase thrown into the ring by Four Horsemen member Jeff Jarrett at Slamboree. Packer teammate Gilbert Brown had tried to save White earlier, but it was all for naught. Proof once again that wrestling is tougher than football.

FLAIR? HUMBLE? FLAIR?

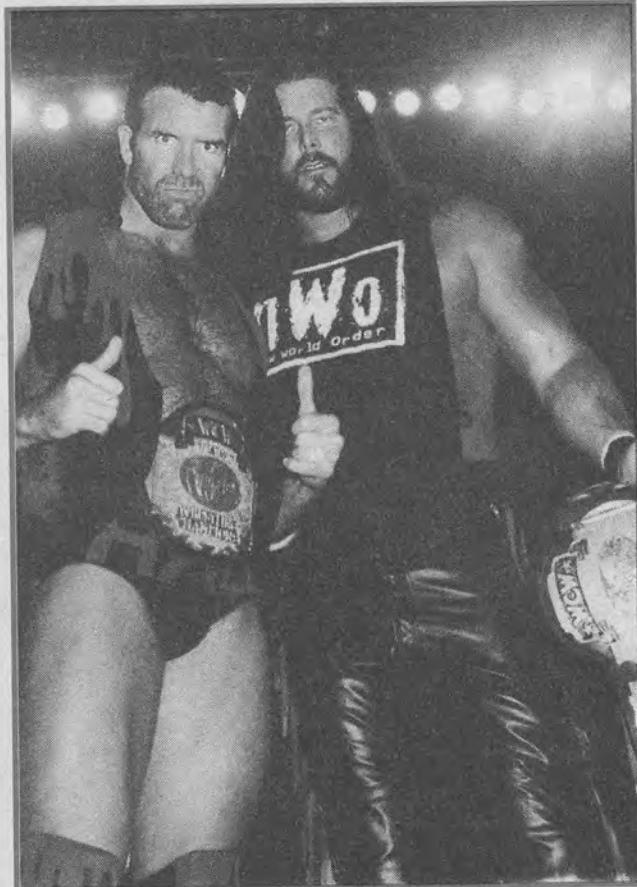
Ric Flair picked the right place—his hometown of Charlotte, North Carolina—to make his return to the ring from rotator cuff surgery. "Nature Boy" was greeted with a standing ovation from the Independence Arena crowd when he made his way to the ring at Slamboree, then teamed with "Rowdy" Roddy Piper and Kevin Greene to defeat Kevin Nash, Scott Hall, and Syxx. Said Flair, who was obviously touched by the reception: "I have walked that aisle thousands and thousands of times, but I have never felt so humbled by a crowd before."

WRESTLER OF THE HALF-YEAR

The Giant. He left the NWO, dominated every wrestler he faced, and even won handicap matches against WCW World tag team champions Kevin Nash and Scott Hall by disqualification. Come to think of it, at 430 pounds, why couldn't Giant be tag team champion on his own? The Giant didn't, indeed, win any titles, but that's only because Hulk Hogan wasn't around for most of the first half.



The Giant



Hall and Nash

TAG TEAM OF THE HALF-YEAR

Scott Hall and Kevin Nash. Yeah, they wouldn't be champions anymore if Eric Bischoff played by the rules and didn't steal the belts from the Steiners. And, yeah, they were losing handicap matches to The Giant. But they've been WCW World tag team champions since October, and that's a pretty good run in this day and age.

MATCH OF THE HALF-YEAR

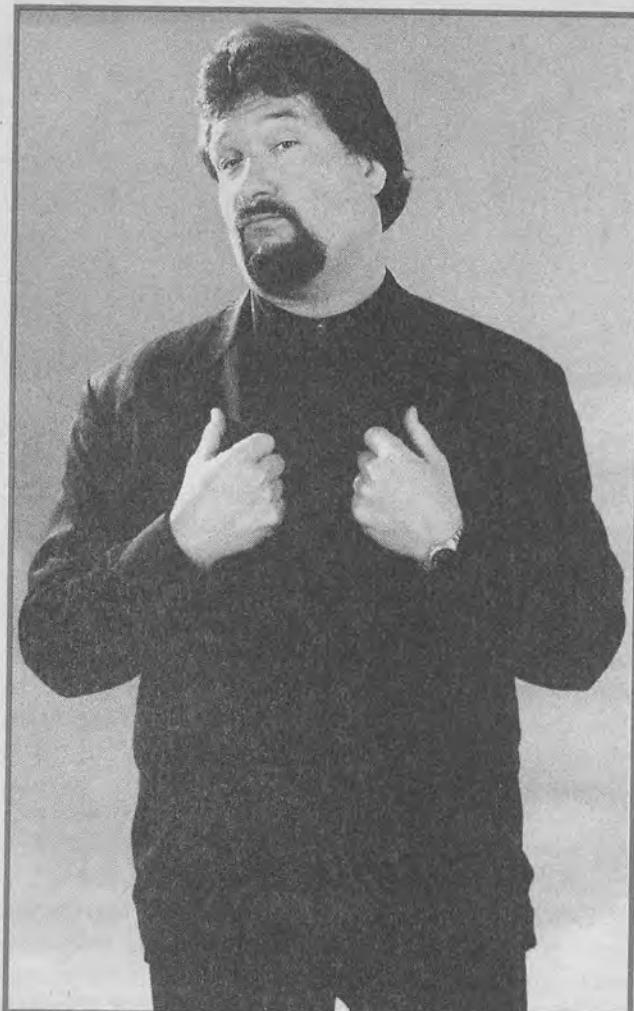
Eddy Guerrero vs. Dean Malenko, March 16. Take two ultrataleント light heavyweights who hate each other, put one man's U.S. title on the line, call the card Uncensored, and what do you get? The kind of match that leaves fans breathless. Guerrero and

WOW MIDYEAR REPORT

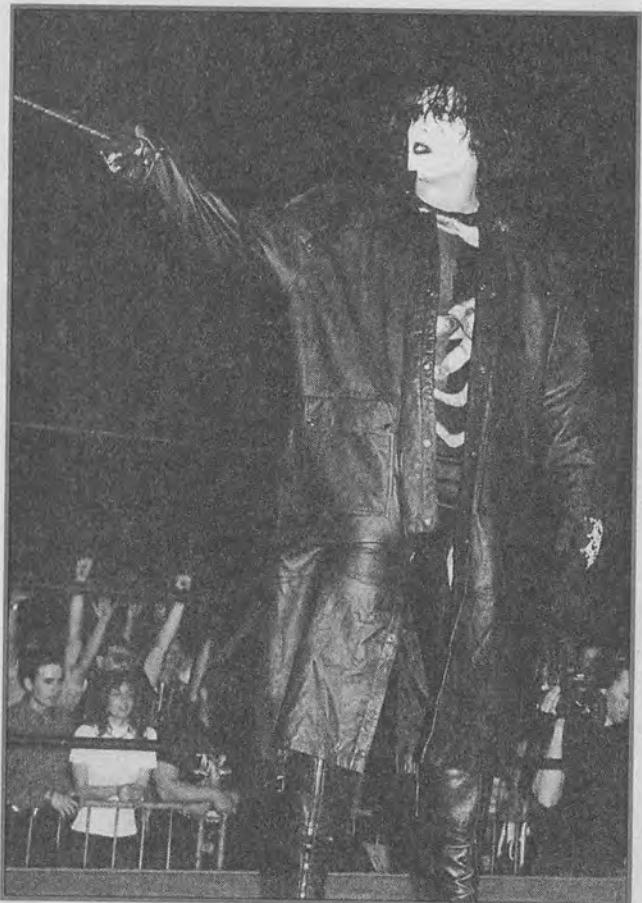
Malenko exchanged kicks, punches, and gouges before getting down to the good stuff and showing off their suplexes and aerial moves. Malenko won the match and the belt, thanks to interference by Syxx.

MANAGER OF THE HALF-YEAR

Ted DiBiase. Although DiBiase was seen less and less with the group as the half-year waned, he was one of the driving forces behind the NWO during the first six months. DiBiase, who tends to have an analytical view of things, helped keep this rapidly expanding group under control.



Ted DiBiase



Sting

MOST POPULAR WRESTLER OF THE HALF-YEAR

Sting. Perhaps the most popular wrestler of the 1990s, Sting left the NWO hanging for a while, then socked him with his answer: a baseball-bat delivered "No!" to joining the group. And he fought on, harassing the NWO with sneak-attacks and never letting them touch him.

MOST HATED WRESTLER OF THE HALF-YEAR

Randy Savage. Tough call here, but we went with Savage by a hair over Hulk Hogan. The "Macho Man," with Elizabeth at his side, spray-painted "Diamond" Dallas Page—a runner-up for Most

Popular—and his beautiful wife, Kimberly, who never did anything to deserve such treatment. Then he showed his adolescent side by taunting Kimberly over her appearance in *Playboy's Nude Celebrities*. Savage has no heart.



Ric Flair

INSPIRATIONAL WRESTLER OF THE HALF-YEAR

Ric Flair. For nearly five months, he was a driving force behind Roddy Piper's war against Hulk Hogan. Then, when he returned from rotator cuff surgery, he helped Piper and Kevin Greene beat the NWO at Slamboree. Whether wrestling or helping, Flair made an impact.



Akira Hokuto vs. Madusa

HOW OUR SECOND-HALF PREDICTIONS FOR 1996 FAARED

(From INSIDE WRESTLING, October 1996)

1. **Rick and Scott Steiner will win the WCW World tag team title.** They did, on July 24, 1996 ... and lost it three days later.
2. **Madusa will sign as the manager of a prominent WCW wrestler.** We're still waiting for that.
3. **The Giant will hold on to the WCW World heavyweight title, despite Hogan's best efforts.** He lost it to Hogan in August. Too bad Hogan rarely defends the belt now.
4. **Elizabeth will reunite with Randy Savage.** It happened, although not tearfully. It's a business relationship, or so they say.
5. **Diesel (Kevin Nash) and Razor Ramon (Scott Hall) will get humbled by longtime WCW stars.** Kevin Greene, Ric Flair, and Roddy Piper left those two and Syxx lying in the ring at Slamboree, but that's 1997. Oh, well.

WCW MIDYEAR REPORT



Dallas Page and Kimberly

ONE OUT OF FIVE ISN'T BAD ENOUGH TO PREVENT US FROM MAKING FIVE PREDICTIONS FOR THE SECOND HALF OF 1997

1. The Giant will destroy Hulk Hogan for the WCW World title.
2. Now that J.J. Dillon is in charge of WCW, Rick and Scott Steiner will finally win the World tag team belts and hold on to them for more than a few days.
3. Too much, too fast: The NWO will begin to crumble.
4. Kimberly and Dallas Page will defeat Elizabeth and Randy Savage in a mixed tag team match.
5. Ric Flair will win the U.S. title.

AND WE JUST HOPE THAT ...

1. Hulk Hogan doesn't get too many more movie deals, because we really would like to see him wrestle once in a while.
2. The Japanese division of the NWO doesn't plan a sneak-attack on the American division.

3. Elizabeth doesn't think she can get into *Playboy* just like Kimberly.

4. Eric Bischoff is given fewer opportunities to speak his mind on *Nitro*.

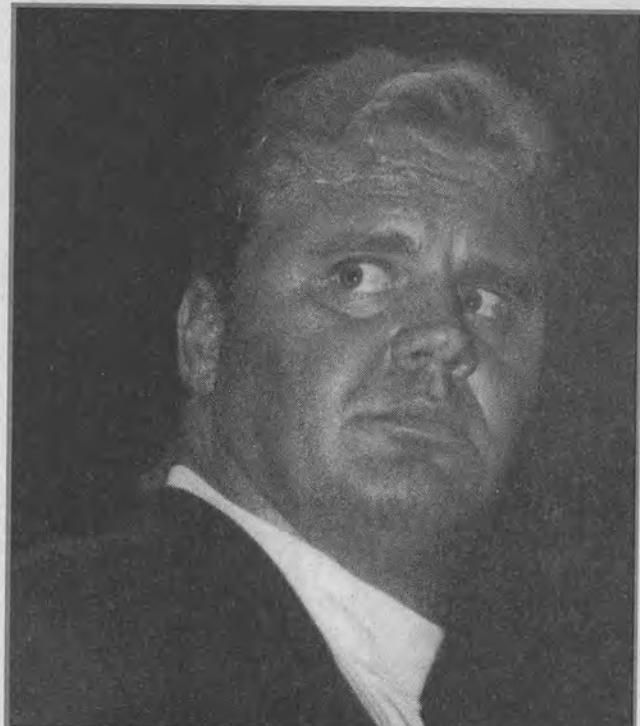
5. Scott Steiner stops getting hurt (and arrested).

YOU PROBABLY WON'T HEAR A LOT FROM ...

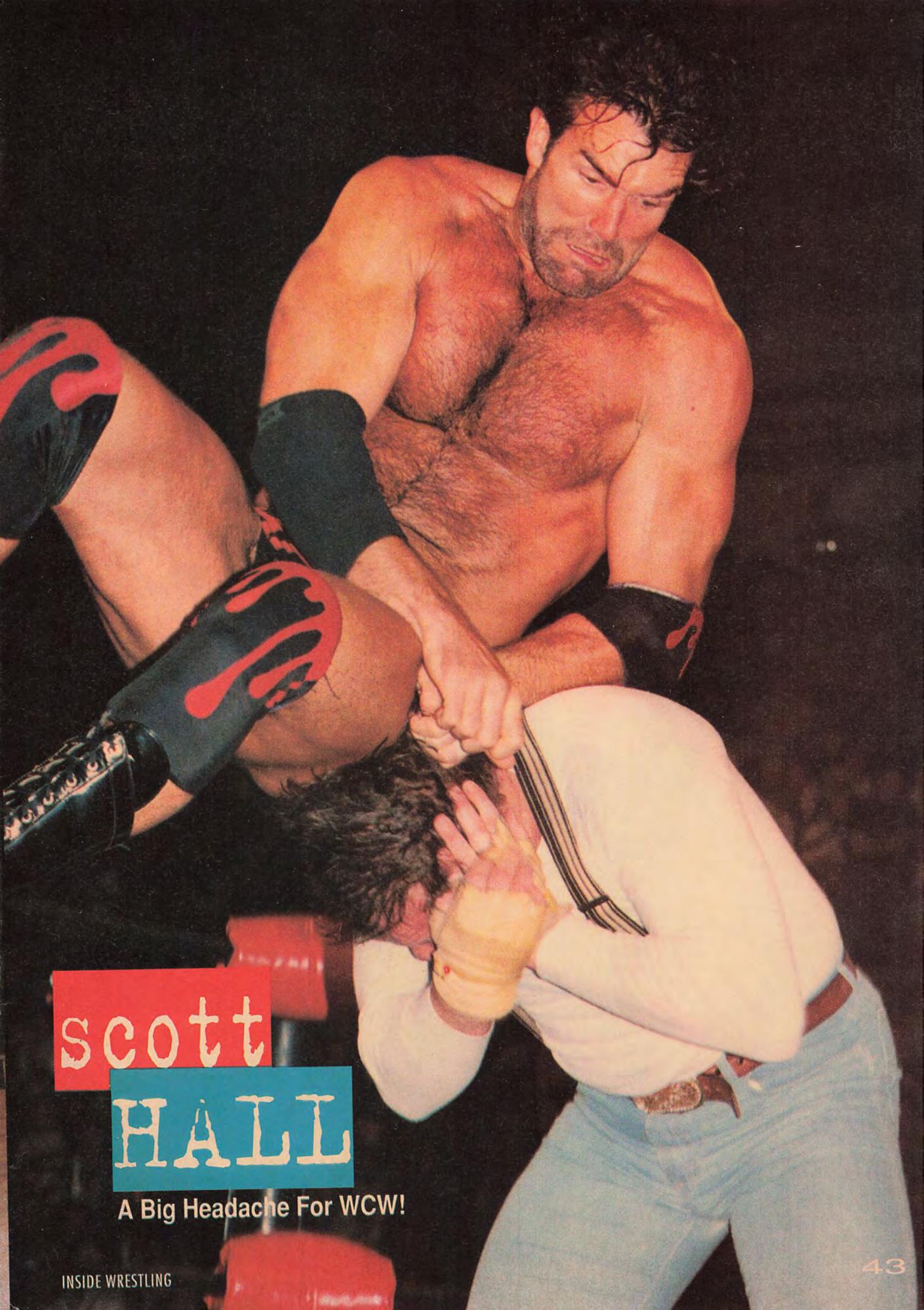
1. Super Calo
2. Mark Starr
3. Johnny Swinger
4. Alex Wright

BUT KEEP AN EYE OPEN FOR ...

1. More ex-WWF stars.
2. Curt Hennig and Raven
3. Meng
4. Ted DiBiase's next stable of wrestlers. We have a feeling he won't be with the NWO much longer. □



Is Hennig perfectly suited for WCW?

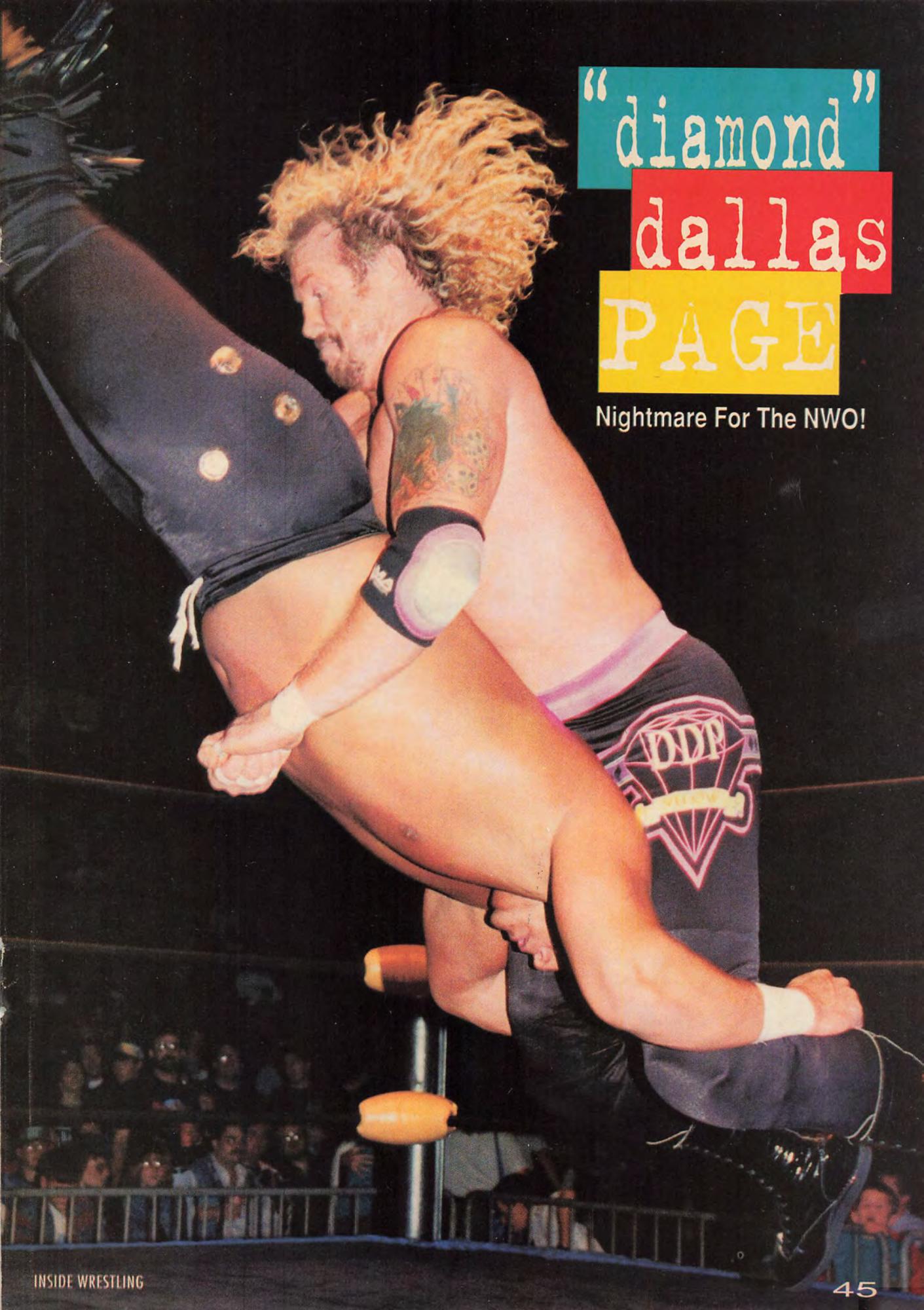


scott HALL

A Big Headache For WCW!

roddy PIPER

An Icon Gets His Kicks!

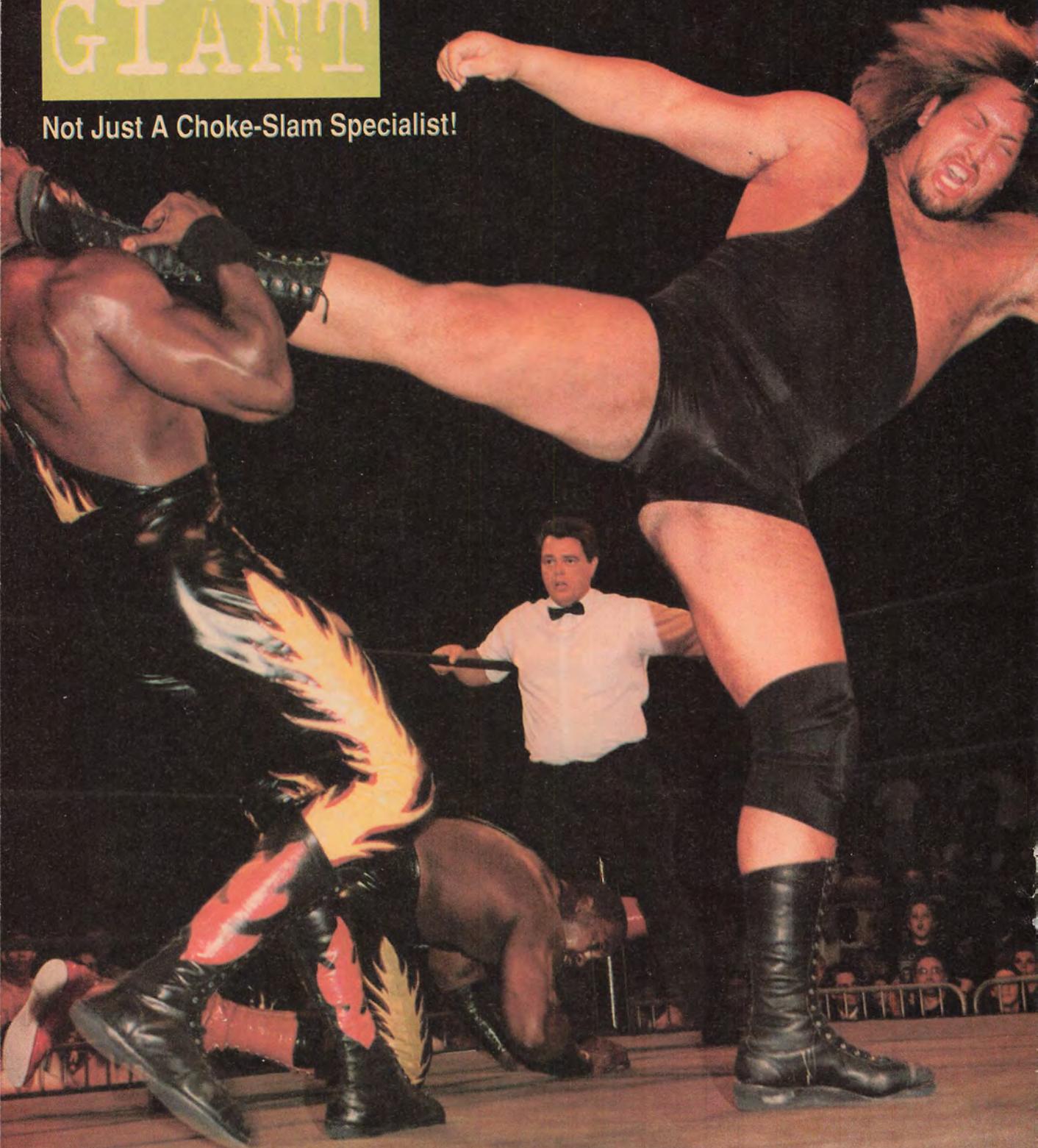


"diamond"
dallas
PAGE

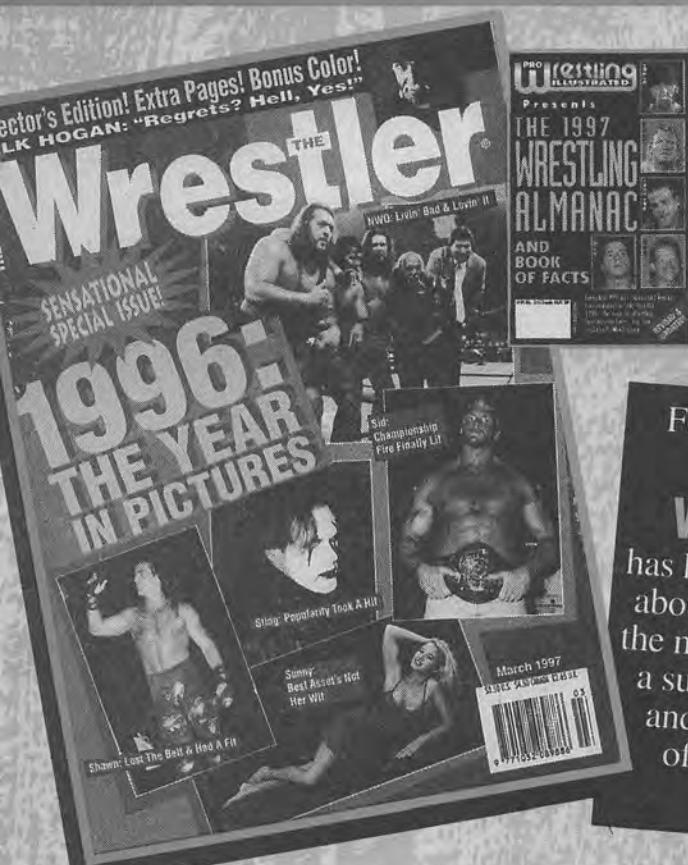
Nightmare For The NWO!

the GIANT

Not Just A Choke-Slam Specialist!



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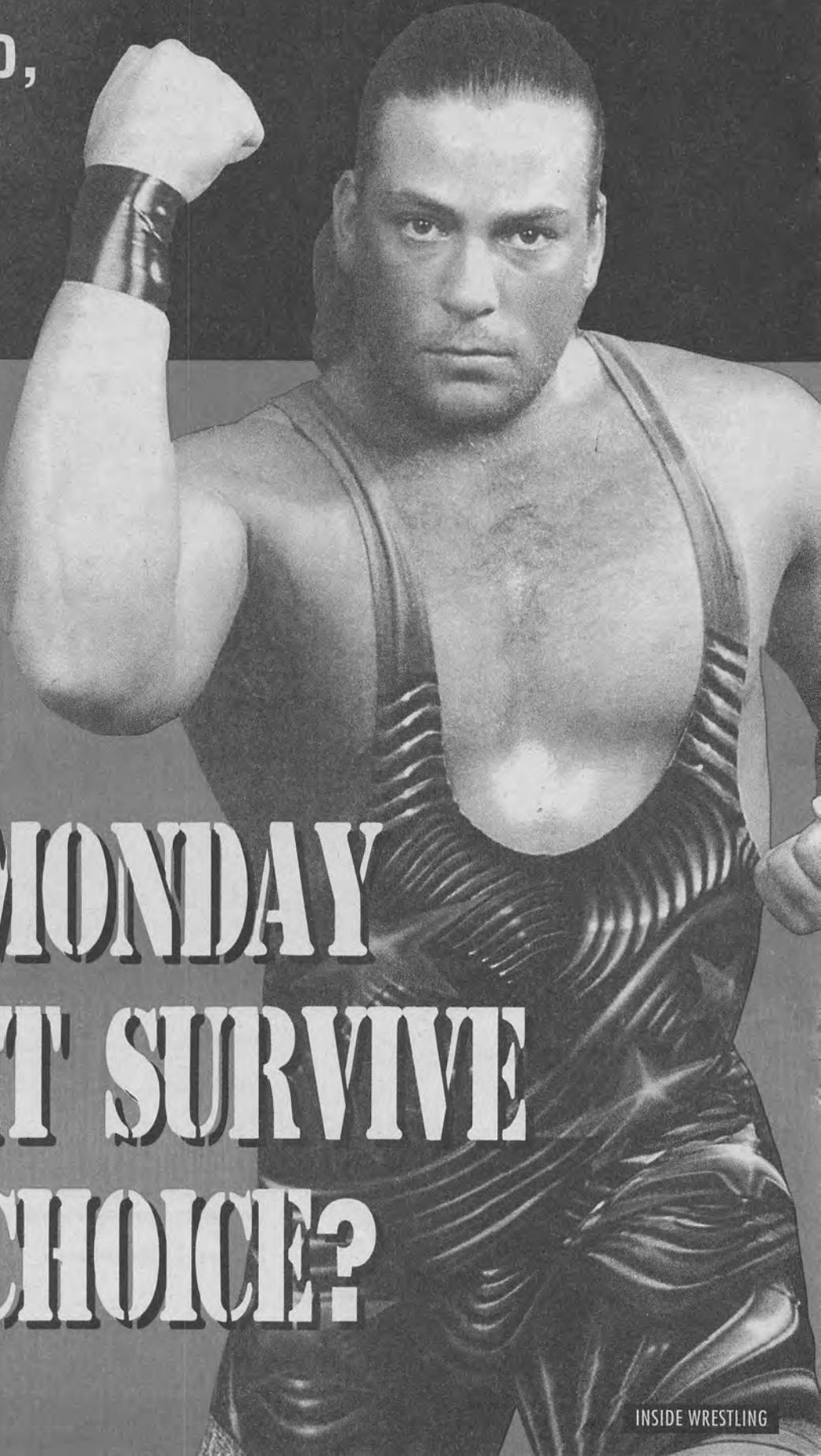
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CAN
MR. MONDAY
NIGHT SURVIVE
HIS CHOICE?



Rob Van Dam made the boldest move of his career when he dumped ECW in favor of the WWF. But in doing so, he made enemies on both sides of the fence. He might not realize it yet, but he's in big trouble!

By Dave Rosenbaum

HE IS A man without a federation. Where he's been he is no longer welcome and where he's going he might not be able to survive. Rob Van Dam shot off his mouth a few too many times, and now he might have to pay for his bravado. If his foes in the WWF have their way, the price will be blood, broken bones, and a return trip to ECW.

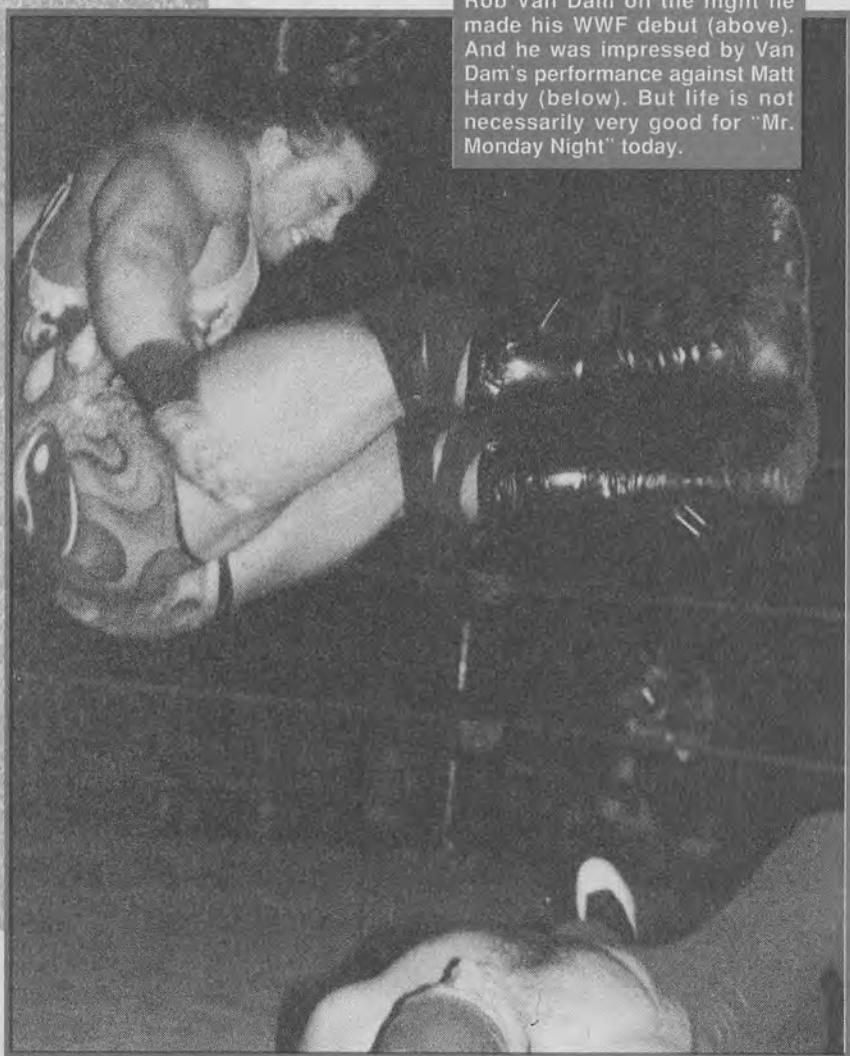
But ECW is a place where Van Dam would no longer dare to tread. He has burned that bridge, left the ashes smoldering. The bridge is out of service. Van Dam was suspended for wrestling in the WWF while under contract to ECW.

"Van Dam might come back, but he's no longer welcome here," said Stevie Richards. "After the stuff he said? There isn't a man in this federation that wouldn't pass up the opportunity to grab him by the neck and knock some sense into that thick skull of his. Besides, what's he ever done? What gives him the right to go around mouthing off about ECW?"

Richards is right: Van Dam is obviously a proponent of the theory that "the louder I yell, the better I am." He never won the ECW



Jerry Lawler proudly introduced Rob Van Dam on the night he made his WWF debut (above). And he was impressed by Van Dam's performance against Matt Hardy (below). But life is not necessarily very good for "Mr. Monday Night" today.



heavyweight title and, at the time of his departure from the federation, was barely holding on to a spot in the top 10. Mostly he was teaming with Sabu.

Fortunately for Van Dam, he found a advocate in anti-ECW WWF commentator Jerry "The King" Lawler, who lobbied for him to federation promoters.

"But he's never won anything," WWF promoters complained.

"Don't worry—the kid is great," Lawler insisted. "He belongs in a big-time federation."

"Who even knows who he is?" they asked.

"That's not his fault," Lawler said. "Those guys in ECW don't know talent when they see it. This kid has talent."

Before Van Dam knew it, he was walking down the aisle at a *Raw Is War* taping in Newark, Delaware, and defeating Matt Hardy in his WWF debut match. He also joined Lawler in an anti-ECW tirade that was heard 50 or so miles away in Philadelphia.

Heard loud and clear, in fact.

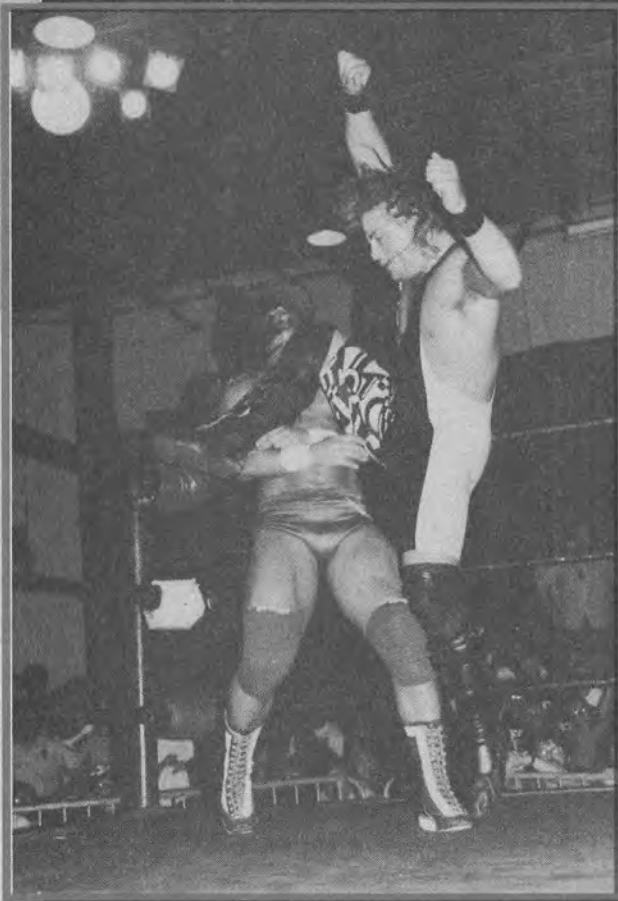
"Van Dam is stupid," Taz said. "Leaving ECW was stupid and hooking up with a loser like Lawler was stupid. That's two stupid moves in a row. Now he's got everybody mad because he's unwelcome in ECW and from what I've seen, the WWF wrestlers aren't too thrilled with him. Van Dam's on his own."

"Mr. Monday Night" says he doesn't care.

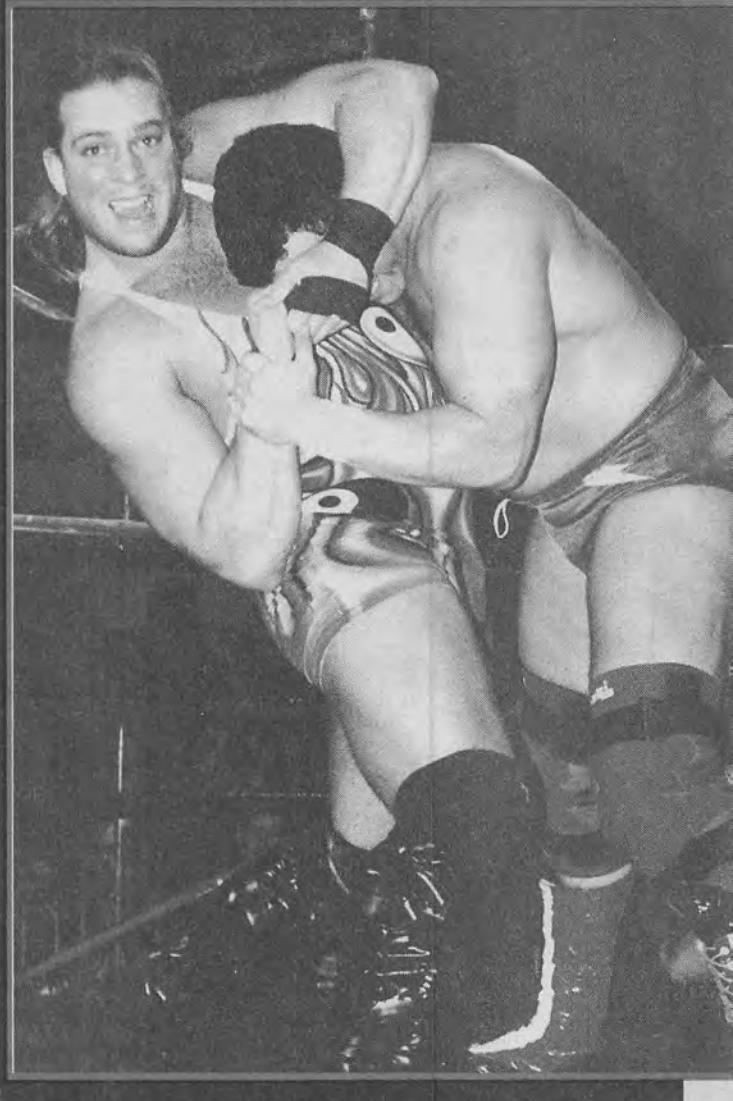
"What the hell does it matter to me if I can't go back to ECW?" Van Dam said. "It's not like I need to go back there. They need me, but I don't need them. I outgrew ECW a long time ago. They can't

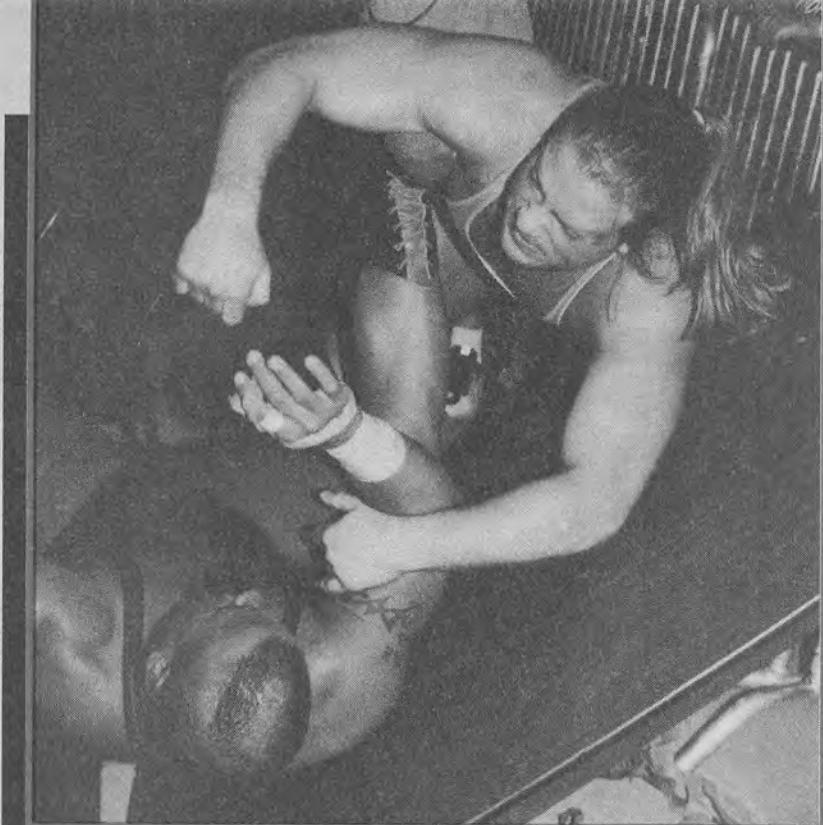
afford me anymore. That bingo hall they call a wrestling arena was always too small for me. I was cramped. There was nowhere to go. Now I'm in a place where my incredible abilities can flourish and I'm with a man, Jerry Lawler, who knows what he's talking about."

Lawler is right about one thing: Van Dam is a talented wrestler who was improving rapidly in ECW. He's one of the most exciting and versatile wrestlers in the world, despite his relatively small frame (6', 227 pounds). The problem is that Van Dam might have picked the wrong federation: He probably would have been better



Van Dam had success against Doug Furnas (above) and his tag team partner, Phil Lafon (right), when all were in ECW together. He might have trouble finding a tag team partner if he wanted to challenge them in the WWF now.





Taz was angry with Van Dam when Van Dam attacked him after his match at ECW Barely Legal. He's even angrier with him now because he feels he has betrayed ECW.

off in WCW, where many former ECW cruiserweights have found a happy home.

"Rob Van Dam? What's a Rob Van Dam?" Steve Austin asked. "Yeah, I heard of the man, but I don't know what the hell he's doing here in the WWF. This is the big time, and Van Dam ain't ready for the big time. If Lawler said he was, fine, but Lawler's wrong. Again. That boy is wrestling with something that's too big for him to handle."

Van Dam isn't concerned. Neither is Lawler, who is proud about finding "the one man in ECW who actually has any talent. I don't know what he was doing there for so long. He can actually wrestle!"

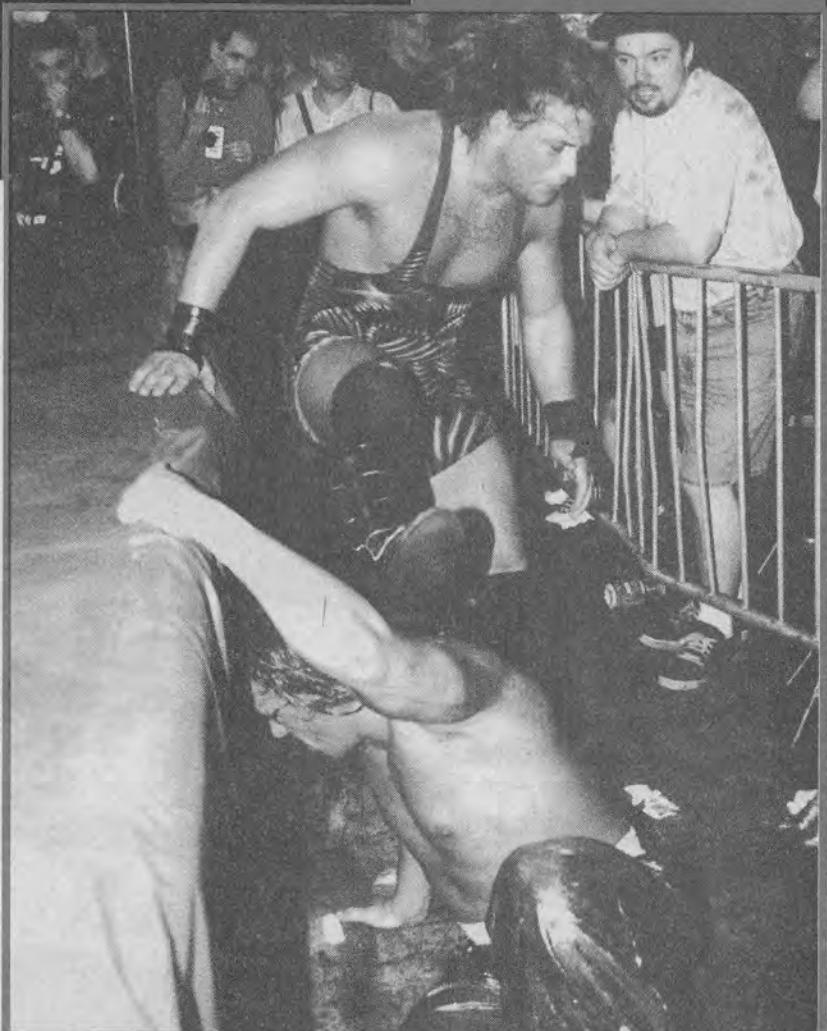
Yes, he can wrestle, but Van Dam's results have always been suspect, and making the move alone was dangerous. Unless Lawler plans on being his teammate, Van Dam faces a long climb

to the top of the WWF ladder. Most experts agree that his chances of making it to the top are remote. Most likely, he'll become another talented wrestler stuck at the mid-card level.

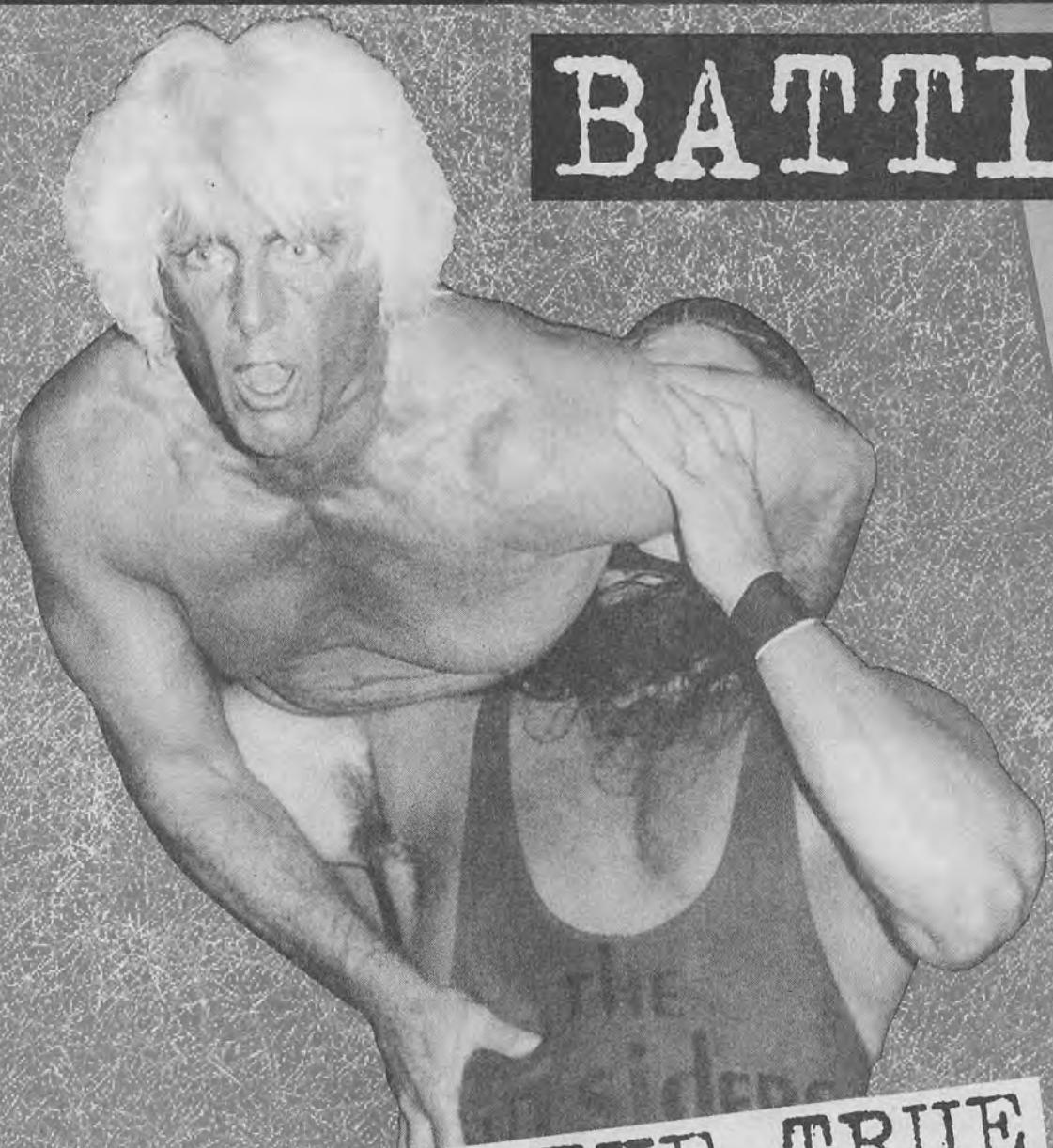
"Maybe he should put on a dress and some makeup and become like some of those other WWF guys," Terry Funk spat. "If I'm right, Van Dam has no chance of surviving over there."

And he can't go back. He can't go home again. The front door has been slammed shut. □

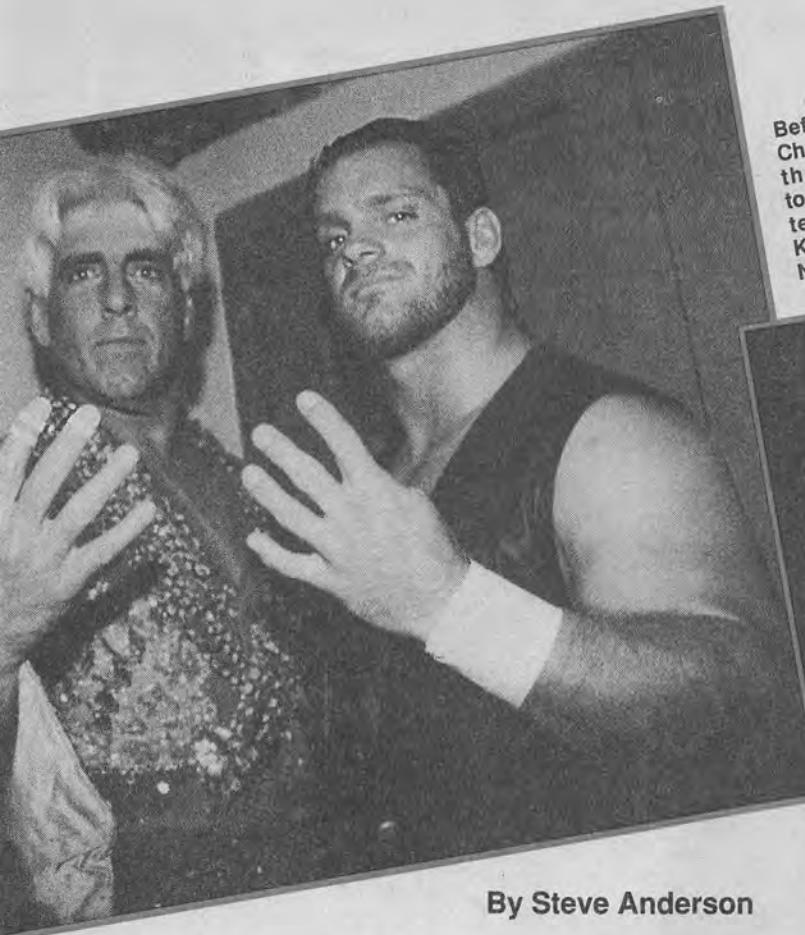
For now, Sabu, a man with whom Van Dam once had a big feud, is one of Van Dam's few true allies. He might not even have him on his side if he decides he wants to try to stick with the WWF.



MESSAGE IN A BATTLE



WHAT'S THE TRUE
MEANING OF FLAIR'S
NON-HORSEMAN RETURN?



Before Flair was injured last fall, he and Chris Benoit could often be seen flashing together (left). But when he needed a tag team partner for Slamboree, he chose Kevin Greene (knocking down Kevin Nash, below) instead of any Horseman.



By Steve Anderson

Ric Flair's comeback was newsworthy because of the partners he chose and those he did not. Was his decision based on selfishness or circumstances? Either way, the Horsemen were less than thrilled with their leader's dalliance

Ric Flair was able to withstand a beating from Kevin Nash and his NWO teammates at Slamboree without any help from his Horsemen comrades. In fact, he seems to be doing very little with the other Horsemen.

RIC FLAIR HAS gotten used to dealing with injuries.

"I've been on the shelf more times than I care to admit," the "Nature Boy," a 25-year veteran, reflected. "But what always makes it easier is the desire I have to get back to that hand-to-hand combat, plus the support from family and friends."

Although he looked happy whenever the cameras were on, Flair's forced convalescence depressed him. He was growing tired of talking about the battles going on around him. He wanted to be in the ring with his cohorts, The Four Horsemen. He missed them.

As Flair slowly recovered from a shoulder injury he suffered in September, the Horsemen seemed to be self-destructing. Steve McMichael's feud with Jeff Jarrett led to Jarrett joining the quartet. Meanwhile, Chris Benoit was distracted (still is, actually) by a feud involving Woman and Kevin

Sullivan that looked like it came right out of *Days Of Our Lives*. Arn Anderson was out of the picture (still is), nursing what could be a career-ending neck injury. Never, it appeared, did the Horsemen need Flair more.

But they were united on one front. They knew that Flair, their leader, could make things right again. They desperately wanted him back in the fold, chopping and figure-fouring on behalf of the quartet ... or was it a quintet?

All the Horsemen stayed in touch with Flair. They called him and visited him regularly at his Charlotte, North Carolina, mansion. They offered him all the support he could want, and all they wanted in return was to hear him say that, yes, he would be getting back into the ring.

In the spring, the announcement came. Flair told everyone that his return would be at Slamboree in May. He and two partners would face three members of the New

World Order, Scott Hall, Kevin Nash, and Syxx. Everything was fine, right? The Horsemen were back and leading the charge against the NWO, right?

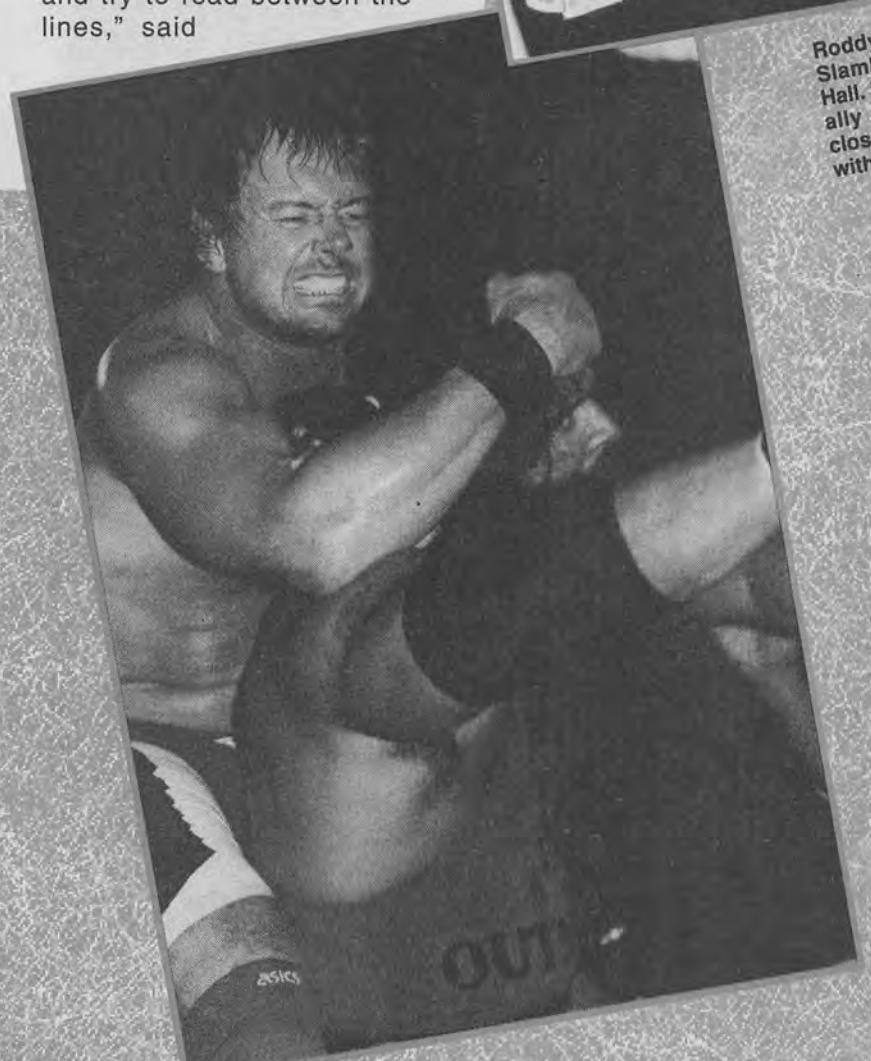
Not quite.

Flair did something that he has not done in a very long time. He picked non-Horsemen to back him up. Benoit, Jarrett, and McMichael were never even considered as tag team partners in the match. And as he discussed his return, not once did Flair flash that famous four-fingered sign. For one of the biggest matches of his career, this all-time great chose Roddy Piper and Kevin Greene as his teammates.

"Look, you media people can write what you want, interpret it, and try to read between the lines," said



Roddy Piper applied a sleeperhold on Scott Hall. The "Rowdy Scot" has proven to be a good ally for Flair. Steve McMichael, who once felt close to Flair (above), isn't sure what's going on with the "Nature Boy."



Flair. "But the bottom line is that Piper and Greene were available and ready and they were right for this situation. 'Hot Rod' and I go back a long way, well before the Horsemen existed. And Kevin Greene had a chance to wrestle with us in Charlotte, home of his very own Carolina Panthers. It was a great combination.

"I know that many people, including the Horsemen, expected me to team with them on my first match back," continued Flair. "But I've got hundreds of matches left in this body. That was just one match to warm up for bigger and better things. Those bigger and better things will include the Horsemen."

But Flair's decision was not universally accepted. Those close to the Horsemen said that the elite clique saw Flair's teaming with Piper and Greene as a snub. Instead of recognizing loyalty and friendship, Flair took the glory route. Benoit, while guarded in his

comments, was probably the most outspoken.

"When I joined the Horsemen, it was explained to me that we would be four men with one purpose in mind," he said. "But it seems to me that others in this organization have their own agenda. They'll do anything for the spotlight."

And what about "Mongo"? After all, he joined the Horsemen after turning against Greene, a plot perpetrated in part by Flair. Apparently, Greene was willing to overlook that incident.

"Kevin Greene is my sworn enemy," said McMichael. "Nothing will ever change that. I don't care if he teams up with my blood relatives. It doesn't change my feelings about him. He can forget history. Flair can forget history. But I won't."

History shows us that when Horsemen feel



Even after all these years in the ring, Flair still seems happy, and he's still saying "Whoooooo!" a lot. His demeanor might change, however, if he suddenly discovers the other Horsemen want nothing to do with him.



Flair has been on a mission to teach some of the sport's younger stars, men such as Syxx, to respect the men who helped to make the sport what it is. But he could probably do that without alienating the Horsemen.

betrayed, they tend to lash out at their betrayer. But when that man is a living legend and the acknowledged leader of the group, they may have no other choice but to quietly move on.

Lex Luger and Sting were kicked out of the Horsemen for having their own agenda. Ole Anderson got the boot for spending too much time with his own son. Flair is guilty of both of those crimes, so it might be up to the other Horsemen to decide what his punishment might be.

Is it possible that Flair would be booted out of the group?

Unlikely, sure, but impossible, no. Remember, Benoit has known Flair well for less than two years, while Jarrett and McMichael have been Horsemen for less than two years combined. All three have shown that they don't need Flair to excel.

And soon they might decide they don't want him around at all. □

HOTSEAT

KEN SHAMROCK

"I'M READY FOR THE HARDEST YEAR OF MY LIFE!"

KEN SHAMROCK DOESN'T look like the typical wrestler. Clean-shaven and dressed conventionally, he is hardly an imposing figure at 6', 220 pounds. He respects his opponents and doesn't think the sport owes him anything. But over the next year or so, you'll probably be hearing a lot about Shamrock, whom many people believe is a future WWF World champion.

In February, the former Ultimate Fighting champion signed a multi-year deal with the federation that caught the attention of many people, including Jerry Lawler. Lawler, who claimed to have taught Shamrock his myriad submission moves, warned, "Everybody thinks it's so easy to be a star in the WWF. You think the UFC was tough? Just wait until you get in the ring with me."

But Shamrock ignored that kind of criticism and the one that said he didn't have enough experience in American-style pro wrestling. And maybe he didn't; Shamrock only wrestled briefly in Japan prior to his signing with the WWF.

He wasted no time making an impact, first as a referee, when he worked the Steve Austin-Bret Hart submission match at WrestleMania

XIII. Hart won by submission, and Austin protested, saying he never gave up. A few months later, Shamrock demonstrated Ultimate Fighting moves when he battled Vernon White at a TV taping. His first big test came at the May 11 *In Your House*, and Shamrock passed. He beat and bloodied three-time former WCW champ Big Van Vader, breaking his nose before forcing him to submit to a leglock.

Suddenly, people are noticing Shamrock, even though he'd rather not draw attention to himself. "He's very humble, surprisingly so," said Senior Writer Dave Rosenbaum, who interviewed Shamrock. "But he's confident. You can tell that. He just doesn't like to talk about himself that much."

"Everybody knows what I've accomplished in the UFC, but I have to prove myself all over again here in the WWF."

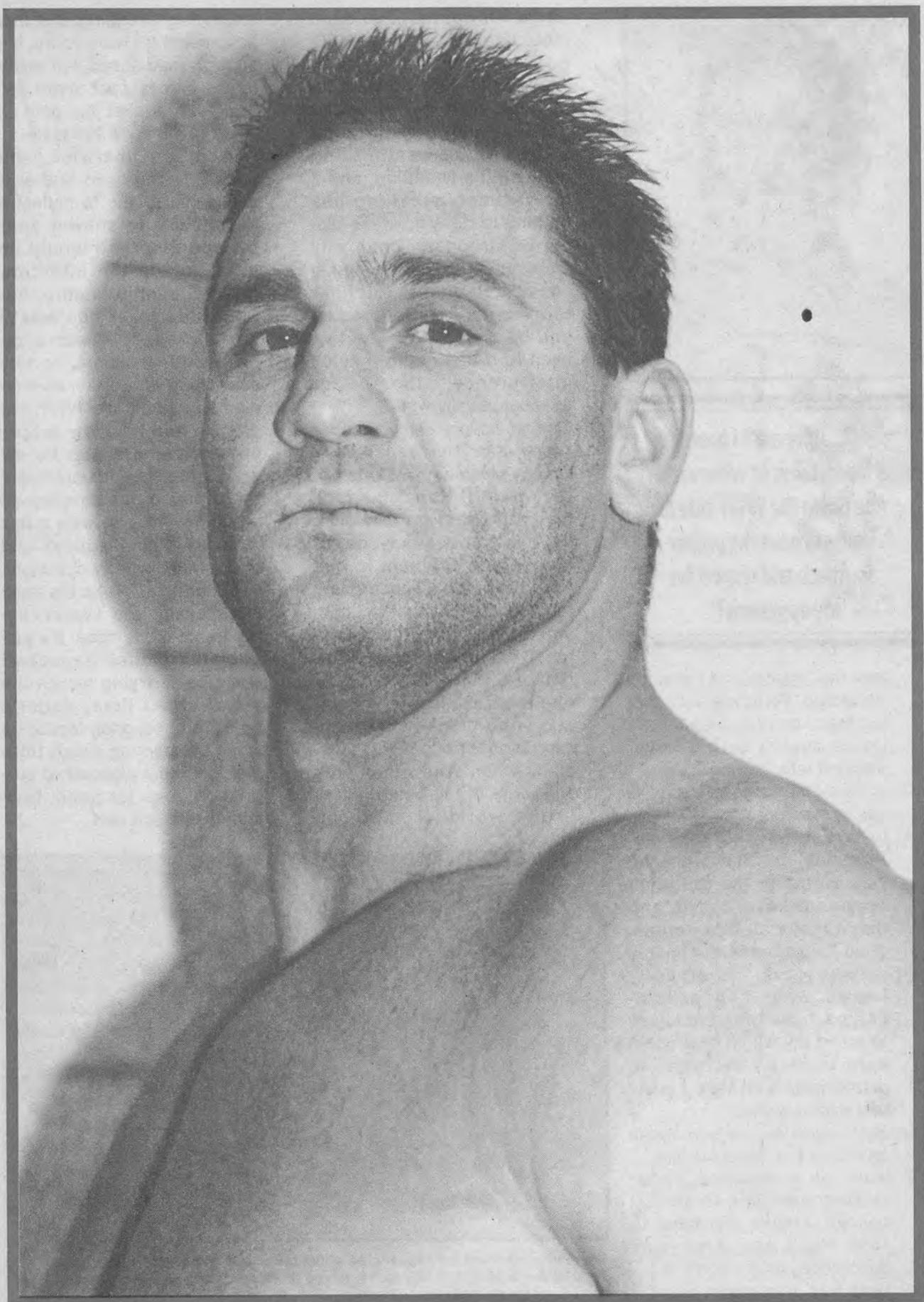
Q: A lot of people were shocked by your victory over Big Van Vader at *In Your House*. There you were, facing your first big test in

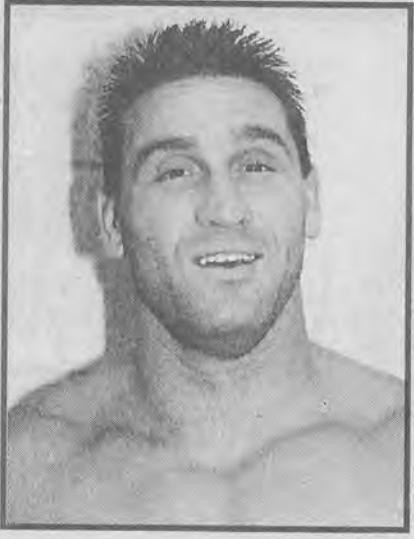
the WWF, and you responded like a champ against a three-time former WCW World heavyweight champion. Were you surprised?

A: I don't know. Surprised? The way I see it, I go into every match trying to be as prepared as I can possibly be and ready to give my best effort. If that's good enough, I'll win, and if it isn't, I'll lose. I don't really obsess about winning or losing. I just worry about being ready and giving my best, so surprise and shock don't come into play. It's not like I sit around thinking, *Can I beat this guy or can I beat that guy?* That's taking too much of a long-term view of things. I'm more concerned with what I have to do to give myself the best chance to win.

Q: But you can see why some people were surprised.

A: Well, sure. Vader's won a lot of championships in wrestling, and I think he's one of the most talented big men in the history of the sport. I guess if I had to step back for a minute and take a look at the matchup, I probably would've agreed that Vader





"...why can't I beat Undertaker or whoever else holds the WWF title as long as I have the proper approach and respect for my opponent?"

was the favorite and I was the underdog. Fortunately, I never did that. I can't do that. If I did, I'd be beaten before I ever stepped into the ring.

Q: Is Vader the toughest opponent you've ever faced?

A: In wrestling? I guess so. Probably. On that night, he was certainly the toughest opponent I ever faced, and that's really all that counts. What happened in the past is meaningless. Everybody knows what I've accomplished in the UFC, but I have to prove myself all over again here in the WWF, and I'm comfortable with that. I knew that when I signed.

Q: But experience and size had to be factors in a match like that.

A: Hold on a second! Vader started wrestling in 1986, I believe. I made my debut in 1989. That's only three years difference, and I don't think that has too much impor-

tance. Of course, I've been more involved with the UFC, but I don't think anybody would call me a rookie. As for the size, yeah, he's a lot bigger than me, but this isn't some kind of weightlifting contest. It's wrestling, and a lot of times wrestling has nothing to do with who's bigger or stronger. That's why it's wrestling. That's why it's considered an art. You have to execute, counterwrestle, and be smart. The way I've seen it, if there's no outside interference, the better wrestler usually wins.

Q: On that thought, can you be the best wrestler in the WWF?

A: On any given night? Certainly. Why not? If Ken Shamrock gives the best he can give, then he can beat anyone. Of course, the problem is that you never know what's going to happen from night to night, and maintaining that consistency is the key. Like in Ultimate Fighting, that's only one night. It's easy to maintain your intensity and concentration for one night, especially when your opponents are some of the best fighters in the world. It might be

tougher in wrestling, but this is something I want to try. It's a tough road ahead. I'm ready for the hardest year of my life!

Q: I take it then that you plan on going for the WWF World title.

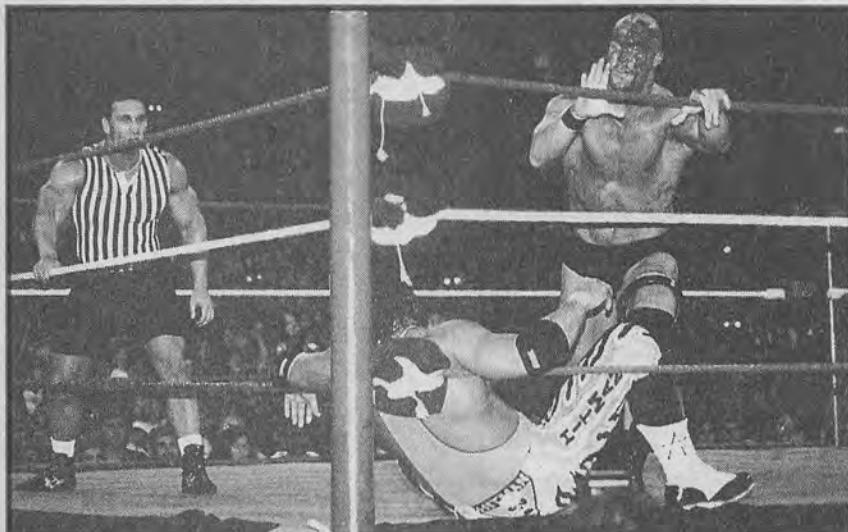
A: Of course. Otherwise, why wrestle? Why even bother if you're just trying to collect a paycheck? To answer your question, sure, it would be great to win the Intercontinental championship, but The Undertaker has what I want. I've already beaten a former world champion, so why can't I beat Undertaker or whoever else holds the WWF title as long as I have the proper approach and respect for my opponent? I'm perfectly aware that I haven't accomplished anything yet. I've won a few matches, which is great, and Vader was a worthy opponent. The fact that I broke his nose was meaningless. I wasn't trying to break his nose. It's just something that happened while I was trying to win the match. Next time, Vader's going to be tougher. Maybe he wasn't expecting much from me. Well, that element of surprise is gone for good. Now comes the hard part.



Ken Shamrock knew he'd have to be at his brutal best to beat Big Van Vader at In Your House in May, and he was. He forced him to submit to a leglock, but he doesn't want to get too excited over one win.



Other WWF wrestlers had better recognize Shamrock, who can be intimidating when he's just standing there in the ring (above), as a legitimate threat. He even showed how tough he can be when he refereed the Steve Austin-Bret Hart WrestleMania XIII match (below).



Q: Was it your goal all along to wrestle in the WWF?

A: Yes and no. Yes because the WWF is the finest wrestling federation in the world and anybody would want to win the WWF title. No because, well, who knows if the WWF even wants you? I haven't had much experience in American wrestling, and it's a well-known fact that the WWF likes more flamboyant types, which I'm definitely not. But when the WWF called, I was certainly inter-

ested in listening, and when they offered me that contract, I signed.

Q: How large was the contract?

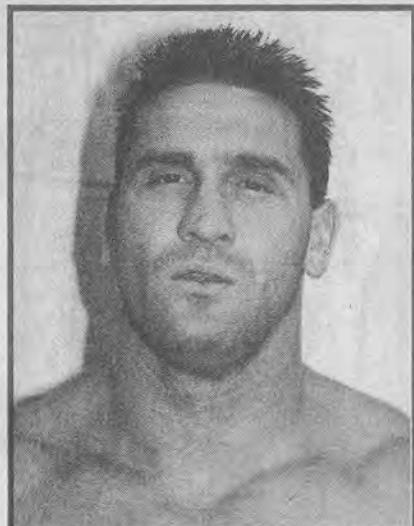
A: Oh, I'd say it was about four pages on 8½-by-11 paper.

Q: No. I mean, how much money was it for?

A: That's a private matter between me, my family, and the WWF. I'd rather not comment.

Q: The Lawler thing ...

A: Jerry Lawler has a very big mouth. I've learned a lot over the years. Maybe I learned some of it by watching Lawler, but who knows? He's the type who likes to take credit for everything. Fine. I really don't care.



"A lot of times wrestling has nothing to do with who's bigger or stronger. That's why it's wrestling.

You have to execute, counterwrestle, and be smart."

A: It's just something I was asked to do, and it worked out fine. Austin had a problem with me, but all he has to do is look at the replay. In my opinion, if you're in a submission match, and you pass out, if you're unconscious, you've submitted. What was I supposed to do, douse him with cold water and ask if he wanted to submit? He was unconscious. He submitted. Then Bret Hart wanted to beat him up some more and I suplexed him. He had no right to get in my face.

Q: You felt you did your job properly?

A: I know I did my job properly, yes. That's all I've ever asked of myself. That's all anybody can ever ask of me. Now let's see how it works out.

Q: It should be interesting.

A: It should be. Talk to me again in a year or so. □

Q: You have a very low-key approach to these things. Very unusual for a pro wrestler.

A: I can only worry about Ken Shamrock. If people need to take credit for things, fine. What does it matter? Lawler made that comment about me thinking it was easy to make it in the WWF. Well, I never thought that, and I never thought being UFC champion entitled me to anything. I'm not a god. I'm just Ken Shamrock. I wrestle.

Q: And sometimes you referee, as you did at WrestleMania XIII.

A Strong Case For Football

McMICHAEL BLOWS A CHANCE TO REDEEM WRESTLING!

Steve McMichael had a chance to make wrestling look very good by defeating Reggie White at Slamboree. "Mongo" may have won that bout, but the sport may have lost a great deal more.

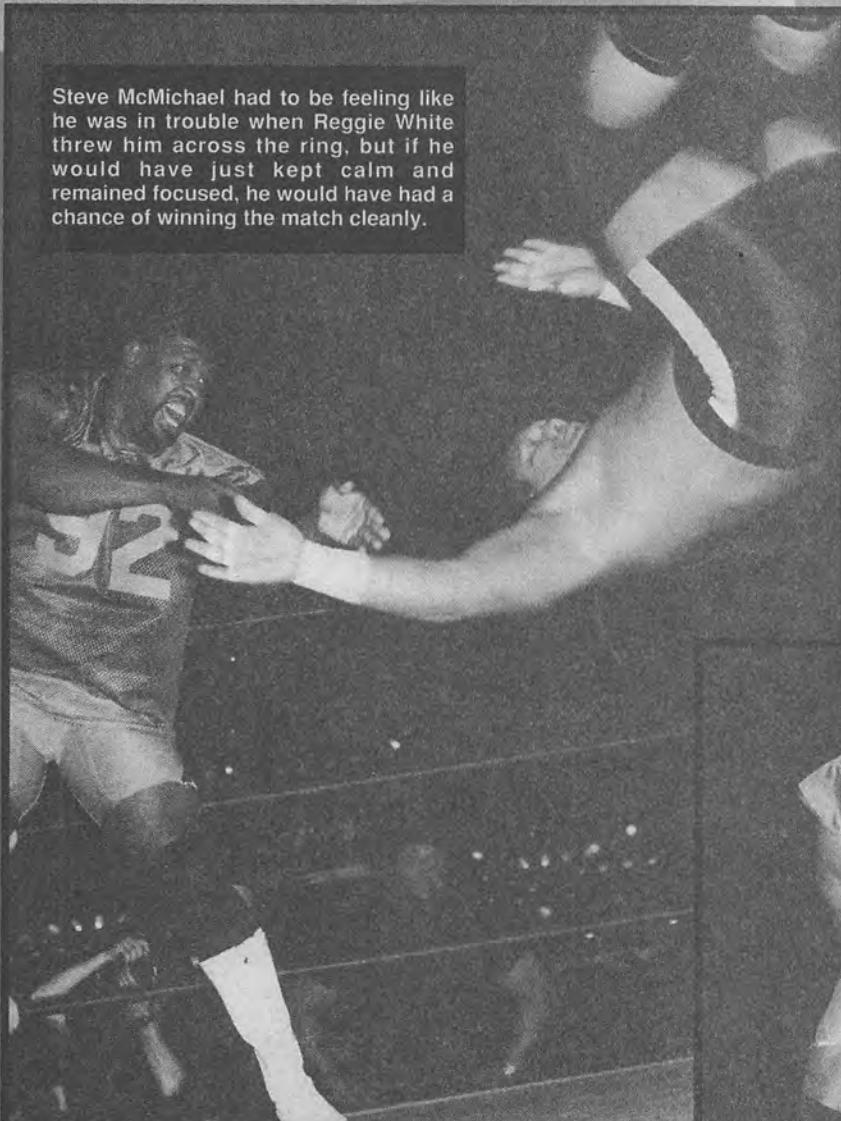
By Harry Burkett

WHAP! THE pulverising smack of metal slapping flesh resounded through Independence Arena. About three seconds later, Steve McMichael's hand was raised in victory. But in front of a capacity crowd in Charlotte, North Carolina—and before countless fans watching Slamboree on pay-per-view—McMichael blew a chance to score a victory for wrestlers everywhere.

In this wrestling vs. football showdown, McMichael had used

his prized metal briefcase to secure a win over Reggie White. Some people were glad to see "Mongo" defeat White, regardless of the means. But most wrestling purists saw McMichael's victory as very hollow. In fact, to them, McMichael's cheap win was probably more devastating than an honorable loss would have been.

The match showcased some of the same fire and intensity that propelled both McMichael and White to Super Bowl victories. McMichael, with one year of wrestling experience behind him, looked like a ring technician com-

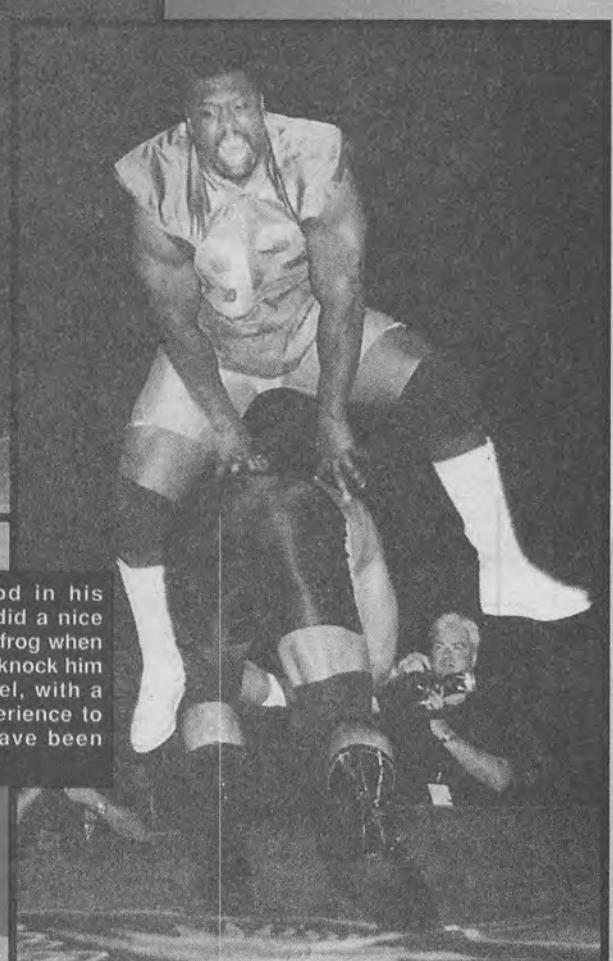


Steve McMichael had to be feeling like he was in trouble when Reggie White threw him across the ring, but if he would have just kept calm and remained focused, he would have had a chance of winning the match cleanly.

pared to White. Ironically, White wrestled much like McMichael had 11 months earlier, when he made his pro debut. He used brute strength, some basic high-impact moves, and channeled his aggressiveness into a determined attack.

The fight was spirited. McMichael was able to counter much of White's brawling and had a definite edge. The match was apparently his to win. That is when an epic battle turned into a minor wrestling tragedy.

With just a little patience, he could have used numerous methods to wear White down and finish off the match. A suplex from the top rope would have been nice.



White was very good in his wrestling debut and did a nice job executing this leapfrog when "Mongo" attempted to knock him down. Still, McMichael, with a year of wrestling experience to his credit, should have been even better.

Maybe a small package. Surely, a figure-four leg-lock would have been very fitting for a Horseman victory. But why a well-timed blindside from behind?

McMichael may not be a "man of a thousand holds" like Dean Malenko, but doesn't he have at least ... 10? "Mongo" didn't win the match based on wrestling superiority at all. He won it by

playing dirtier.

Days after the loss, McMichael had no regrets. "How could I have won more convincingly? Reggie White came into my world, and he paid the price, baby. Sure, I could have used a Boston crab or, heck, maybe even a sunset flip. But he would have just dusted himself off and stumbled out of the ring. I aimed to teach him a lesson. That's why I laid him out like a rug!"

But so much more was expected of him.

Many were still feeling the sting of Lawrence Taylor's victory over Bam Bam Bigelow at WrestleMania XI in 1995. When Bigelow shoved Taylor, who was sitting ringside at the Royal Rumble, it sparked an old-fashioned duel:

McMichael got the best of an exchange with White outside the ring. Too bad he felt like he had to prove he was the better brawler than the Green Bay Packers star. He should have stuck to wrestling.



man vs. man, wrestling vs. football.

Bigelow was considered to be a wrestler in his prime. Certainly, no one would expect him to outmaneuver Taylor on the football field. So how could Taylor, someone with no ring experience, waltz into WrestleMania XI and cleanly defeat one of wrestling's top stars? But Bigelow fumbled the ball. And plenty of wrestling fans were embarrassed.

Enter Steve McMichael.

After a public war of words between McMichael and Reggie White of the Green Bay Packers turned ugly, the match was signed: wrestling vs. football, part

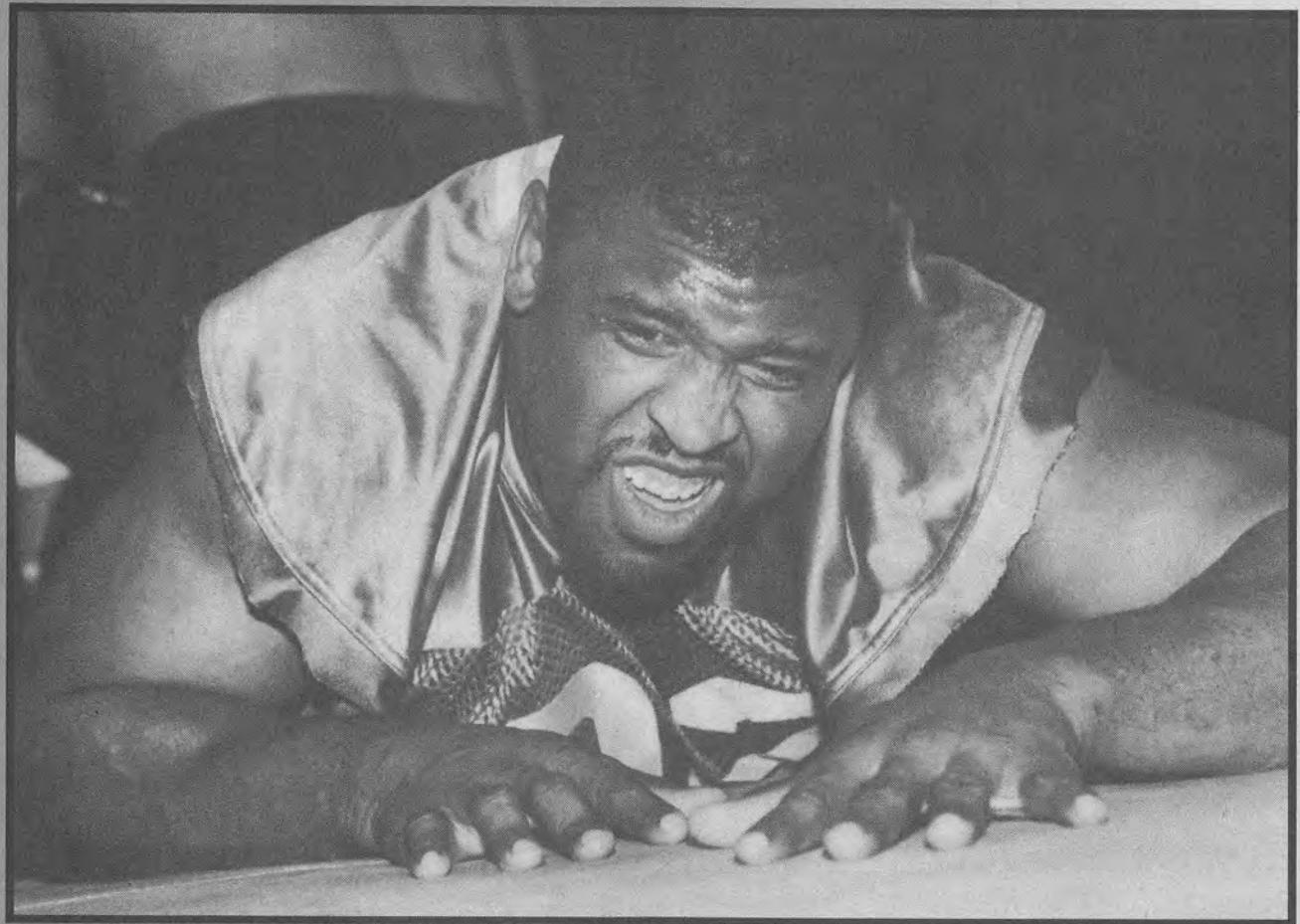
two. WCW billed the contest as a battle between the Bears and the Packers. To diehards, it meant so much more. "Mongo," combining his football experience with his mat skills, had an excellent shot at getting a decisive victory.

Over the previous year, he had shown a willingness to work extremely hard to become a good wrestler. McMichael was *proud* to don the trunks, do interviews, and give his best effort in the ring every night.

And during his escalating feud with White, he began to earn the fans' respect, despite his bombastic manner.

All that was forgotten when McMichael hit White with the briefcase. It seemed as if he ignored the sport's integrity, forgot all the hours he spent at WCW's Power Plant, and never gave a thought to the fans who believed in him.

"What in Sam Houston does everybody want out of me?!" McMichael yelled when asked about his feelings on the subject. "I thought that's what everybody wanted! You can't suit anybody these days! If I just pinned him, all these so-called fans would say, 'Gee, Mongo, why didn't you punish him more? Why didn't you knock his lights out?' I'm tired of

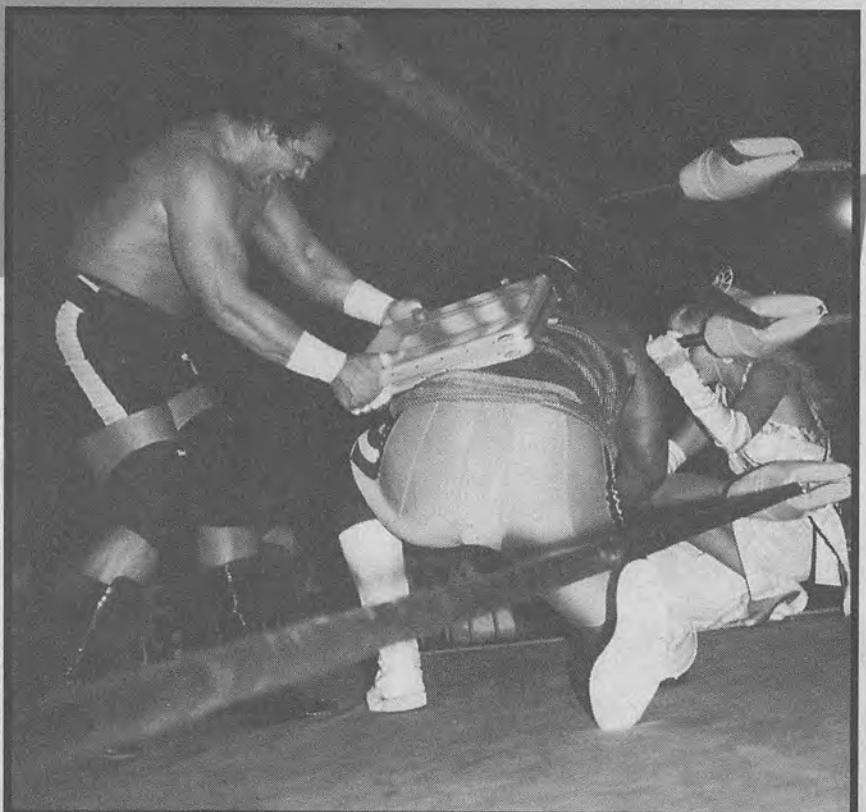


White didn't give in when McMichael caught him in a Boston crab (above). Someday he might seek a rematch. That wouldn't be good news to McMichael, who, when he used that briefcase (right), sent a message to everyone saying that he didn't think he could beat Reggie fairly.

the critics. You can't satisfy none of the people none of the time.

"Look, my friend, I'm not wrestling's savior. I'm just exposing yellow-bellied cowards like Reggie White and Kevin Greene for what they truly are. And I'm takin' care of business, Horseman style!"

Perhaps too much pressure was placed on McMichael. The expectations may have been too high. And it probably isn't a question of which sport is better. But it is a matter of honor. □



The Mother Of Taking The To The



These two belong on an afternoon talk show: Madd Maxxine and her mother, Mama Maxxine, two women who have never resolved their relationship. Move over, Dusty and Dustin—this is the parent-child relationship that the whole wrestling world is going to be talking about!

When Mama Maxxine (left) first arrived in the PWF, she was there to support her daughter, Madd Maxxine (opposite page, right). Then she got jealous of her success and started feuding with her. So now they're enemies ... sometimes.

All Feuds: Madness **MAXX**

By Dave Rosenbaum

WHEN MADD MAXXINE was a little girl—if you can believe that the Pro Wrestling Federation junior heavyweight champ was ever a little girl—she would sit on her parents' bed and watch her mother get ready to go out. Mama Maxxine would pull on a pair of fishnets and the tightest skirt in her closet, blow dry her hair into a friz, then sllop on some makeup and perfume. Finally, after about an hour or two of this, Mama would pat little Maxxine on the head and tell her, "Don't wait up. We'll be home late."

Then Mama would traipse out the door, wiggling her hips from side to side, and climb into the driver's side of her rusted old Dodge Dart. She was going off to work at one of the nearby cocktail lounges, where she was the most popular waitress in town.

This really didn't matter much to Maxxine's father, because by





PWF fans have enjoyed seeing Mama and Madd Maxxine tussle in the ring during tag team matches. But they have on occasion seen them fight each other and help each other on the same night.

7 o'clock every night he was usually sprawled out in front of the TV set, ogling Vanna White or trying to figure out why the HBO channel had all those squiggly lines going through it. And that left Maxxine on her own, alone in her room, wishing her mommy didn't have to work nights and her daddy would do something besides lay on the couch and ignore her.

It was like that until Maxxine



Madd Maxxine howls in pain as her mother wrenches her wrist and arm. The younger Maxxine says she still carries some pain from her childhood.

turned 14. That's the age when she discovered boys and realized that she could look just like Mama, only younger and better. It was also the age when Mama Maxxine realized that she was running out of makeup twice as fast as she used to.

Little Maxxine had become a woman.

But although she used her mother's makeup and her mother's hair dryer, and somehow seemed to attract the 18-year-old sons of all of her mother's friends, Maxxine was determined to not become just like her mother. There was no way she was going to spend an unhappy life with a lazy husband on the sofa and the meal money depending upon a few hot tippers showing up at the bar. No way. She was going to call the shots. She was going to make a life for herself. And if she was going to have a man, he was going to be at her side.

That's when the trouble began. That's when little Maxxine said to her mother, "When I grow up, I'm gonna be just the opposite of you."

Mama slapped Maxxine across the face, then asked questions.

"What do you mean by that?" she demanded.

Maxxine didn't cower. She talked back, because that's how she had been taught.

"I mean," she said, "that I'm not gonna be just like you. I'm gonna be somebody."

Of course, Maxxine turned out to be just like nobody. There isn't a soul on this planet like Madd Maxxine, who has taken the application of face paint to new levels and is one of the few women in wrestling his-

tory to compete with men on an equal basis. She has been the PWF junior heavyweight champ since last August, has beaten most of the men in her federation, and is one of only three women to break into the "PWF 500" (she was the only woman to make it last year). Rather than following in her mother's pump-steps, she broke out on her own. And succeeded.



Black Angel is one of many men in the PWF who have tried to defeat Madd Maxxine, but not one of them has pinned her. Her mom might be her toughest opponent to date!

But guess what. Mama's back in town.

It happened a few months ago. Madd Maxxine was helping George South in his feud against Italian Stallion, and Mama Maxxine offered some motherly aid. Then things started going wrong—real fast. It got real strange, too.

Mama got jealous of her daughter's success. After all, she had never made the "PWF 500" or won a wrestling championship. Then Maxxine dumped South, became a fan favorite, and joined Italian Stallion's side. Rather than following her daughter, just as her daughter refused to follow her so many years ago, Mama Maxxine sided with South. South and Mama wrestled Stallion and Maxxine several times, and most

of the matches were unusually violent.

There were, however, several twists. A few times, Maxxine turned against Stallion and helped her mother and South beat him up. Sometimes mother and daughter attacked Stallion together. On a few cards, Maxxine helped her mother beat up Stallion early in the evening, then later on saved Stallion from a beating. What's going on? Who knows? Who can figure out women?

"Exactly," said South. "I don't know what those two women are doing half the time, but if I could figure that out, I'd be the smartest man on earth. The way I see it, that mother and daughter have some problems with each other and they haven't worked them out. I don't know who to trust."

Stallion, who isn't sure whether he wants Madd Maxxine on his side, actually agreed with his longtime rival on this point.

"They're crazy," Stallion decided. "A lot of women are lunatics, and those two are the wackiest of all. You know what I think? Maybe me and South should forget about the ladies and just settle this on our own without them butting in. That would be fine with me."

Not fine with mother and daughter, who have happily become the focus of a feud between two men. They are the manipulators. Problem is, they can't figure out how they feel about each other.

"I feel really bad about hitting my mama sometimes," Maxxine admitted.

"She's my daughter, and I love her," Mama Maxxine said in a rare moment of candor. "But sometimes she just needs a good whipping."

One of these days, Mama and Maxxine might solve their conflict. Until then, the PWF is nothing but the potential site for a future edition of *The Ricki Lake Show*. □



Madd Maxxine used to second George South for many of his PWF matches, but now they sometimes have to wrestle each other in mixed tag matches (above). Of course there are also times when both Maxxines are on his side (below). This is really confusing!



The telephone wires sizzle each month, as two top wrestlers voice their rage and hostility toward each other. Here's the unedited transcript of their conversation, your chance to feel the raw emotion that results when two antagonists face off ... One On One

THIS TIME LAST year, a faceoff between Nick Patrick and Eric Bischoff would have been unlikely. More recently, it would have been unthinkable. Today, it is inevitable.

Bischoff, the WCW executive-turned-NWO head honcho, was delighted when Patrick, one of the sport's most respected referees, decided to join the upstart gang of rulebreakers. Of course, in doing so, he essentially threw away his reputation, but at the time Patrick didn't care; he believed that his controversial career move would bring a terrific boost to his fortunes.

For a while, his beliefs were confirmed, as he happily watched his cohorts beat up on whomever WCW put in their way. Then members of the NWO started quarreling with each other, and that had an effect on Patrick. At Spring Stampede, Ted DiBiase tried to prevent Kevin Nash from beating up on Rick Steiner, and Patrick didn't want to count to three when Steiner was down. Nash responded by attacking him. Patrick's response was to walk out on the NWO and disappear from the wrestling scene for several weeks.

When J.J. Dillon began his tenure as chairman of the WCW Executive Committee, Patrick returned and asked Dillon to reinstate him as a WCW referee. Dillon took Patrick back, but only after Patrick proved that he could be impartial. That proof came at Slamboree. After referee Randy Anderson was knocked down during Ric Flair, Roddy Piper, and Kevin Greene's match against the NWO's Nash, Scott Hall, and Syxx, Patrick substituted for Anderson and counted Flair's pin of Hall.

So Patrick is pleased to be back in a position of respect in WCW, and Bischoff is infuriated that someone would leave his organization and be

ONE O



"You came pretty far in a short time, Nick. You were making some real good progress with the NWO. Now you're a nobody again, a worthless nobody who has it out for the NWO."

—Eric Bischoff

happy about it. However, he agreed to take time off from his search for another ref to square off against Patrick ... "One On One."

ERIC BISCHOFF: I'm not going to mince any words, Patrick. I think you're pathetic! You had a chance to be something in the greatest organization in wrestling history and you threw it away!

NICK PATRICK: That's funny, Bischoff. You usually don't get so bent out of shape. Afraid I made a fool out of you? Truth is, I don't give a damn about you. I'm looking out for myself now.

EB: You couldn't make a fool out of me. You're just a third-rate referee. That's all you are. If I'm angry, it's because we tried to give you a life in this sport. We tried to give you a shot at the big time. You didn't make a damn thing out of your chance. You let down me and you let down the NWO!

NP: Oh, I'm sure you'll recover. Don't shed any crocodile tears for me. Truth is, Eric, at first I was real grateful to get my chance. I believed in the NWO. I thought that by joining it, I'd be sticking up for the little guy in this sport. I'd be representing all the people who felt like they never got a chance to make it big. For a while, everything was all right. But then I began to see things different. I began to see that all you guys cared about is power and humiliating people. You didn't care about building something better than WCW. You wanted to make something worse, a lot worse. So I got out.

EB: Nick, my friend, that is the lamest interpretation of things that I've ever heard! Sticking up for the little guy? I guess you had your reasons for joining the NWO, but that shouldn't have been one of them. In this organization, you stick up for one thing: the

N ONE



"All I'm doing now is what I did before I veered off in the wrong direction: calling them as I see them. If that makes me a nobody in your book, I don't care."

—Nick Patrick

NWO. We're building the organization of the future. We thought you had the talents and attitude we were looking for, Nick, but I guess we were wrong. Dead wrong.

NP: Hey, Eric Bischoff admitting he was wrong. There's a surprise!

EB: Listen, smart guy, you better watch what you say before one of us wipes that grin off your face! Don't think that because you left the organization you're done with us completely.

NP: That sounds like a threat, Eric. Do you want to get into more trouble than you're in now? It's one thing to target a wrestler, but I'm no wrestler. There are big penalties for laying your hands on a referee, and if you come after me, I'll do my best to see that you're hit with the biggest!

EB: Oh, you're gonna get your new buddy Marshal Dillon after us? Well, remember one thing: Dillon used to

head The Four Horsemen, a bunch of guys who weren't exactly concerned with playing things by the book. Yeah, Dillon may call himself an executive, and he may have some nice office over at CNN Center, but I'll bet his methods haven't changed.

NP: I think you're wrong there. I trust Mr. Dillon to do the right thing. He's a good man, and I'm thankful he gave me a second chance here in WCW. He would have been well within his rights to give me the boot, but he didn't. He showed faith in me. I intend to do the same for him.

EB: Yeah, by calling matches WCW's way. Don't tell me you're not looking to screw us! You've already cost Mr. Wall Street a few matches with your biased refereeing. If he were unbiased, he would have fired you after those debacles.

NP: All I'm doing now is what I

did before I veered off in the wrong direction: calling them as I see them. If that makes me a nobody in your book, I don't care. I don't care about you. I care about the wrestlers and fans who deserve referees who are completely impartial, not ones bought off by the NWO!

EB: Sounds like you're jealous of the NWO's success. We get things done. Period. That's why we've come so far in such a short time. And you came pretty far in a short time, Nick. You were making some real good progress with the NWO. Now you're a nobody again, a worthless nobody who has it out for the NWO. Tell me you weren't out to get us at Slamboree.

NP: All I did was take over for Randy Anderson when he got knocked down. Randy would have done the same if I got knocked out. It's all according to WCW rules. I wasn't looking to get back at the NWO. I was just doing my job.

EB: Yeah, but you hadn't even been reinstated yet! So that means you were there illegally, and the NWO's so-called loss should be erased off the books!

NP: Look, a loss is a loss. Your guy got pinned by Ric Flair. Just accept it and move on. You NWO guys are always looking to hide behind one rule or another. It's really sad.

EB: No, what's sad is the way you're sucking up to Dillon and the rest of the WCW hierarchy. You keep saying the mistake you made was joining the NWO. Friend, you'll soon find out the real mistake was returning to WCW. In the NWO, you were a big wheel. Now you're just a cog in their propaganda machine.

NP: I expect that to be your take on it, Bischoff. A big wheel in the NWO? Are you kidding? When I think back on it, I didn't have one moment's freedom. It was all an illusion. I'm no big deal in WCW, but I'm very content with my role here. If I'm just true to myself, everything will work out.

EB: Oh, please, spare me the sermon! Hey, buddy, I hope you find whatever it is you're looking for. I really do. And maybe you'll reconsider someday and give me a call. It'll be a pleasure to hang up on you. □

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(Continued from page 5)

Maybe a few dozen sessions with noted psychologist Dr. Sidney Basil should be arranged to help Tyler deal with this latest trauma.

NINA O'DAY
Carson City, NV

AS THE WORLDS TURN

If INSIDE WRESTLING is looking for a world title controversy, it need not look any further than WCW. "Hollywood" Hulk Hogan continues to hold on to the WCW World title thanks to the constant interference from those glorified thugs known as the New World Order. The Giant, Lex Luger, and Roddy Piper have all narrowly missed three-counts due to interference. The WCW World tag team title situation is a mess, too. The tag team belts were given back to Kevin Nash and Scott Hall twice. The NWO has monopolized both these titles, and they are using all of their underhanded resources to keep them, which is hurting the prestige of the belts.

What is going on in WCW, to me, is more controversial than what is going on in the WWF ("House Of Horrors! Fourth World Title Change In '97 ... Can The Undertaker Restore Order," July 1997). At least the WWF World title has bounced between four equally matched contenders. Shawn Michaels, Bret Hart, "Psycho" Sid Vicious, and The Undertaker all held the WWF title before their short reigns began this year. The matches that produced the title changes were exciting and could have gone either way.

The prestige of a title depends on the man who holds it. How many times it changes hands is not as important.

RICHARD SOUZA
San Lorenzo, CA

GET WELL, ARN

I haven't heard anything on WCW broadcasts about the condition of Arn Anderson since his injury and operation. It upsets me that these so-called journalists haven't been giving updates on his condition, since Arn does have a lot of loyal fans.

I wish Arn well with his rehabilitation and hope he has a speedy recovery and makes it back into the ring soon. I really miss seeing him every week. He was the anchor for The Four Horsemen, and without him, the group has fallen apart. The Horsemen need Arn if they are to become a cohesive unit again.

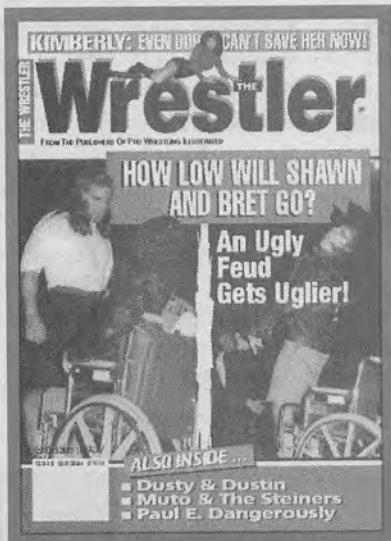
CORRIE JONES
Fort Worth, TX □



Arn Anderson (shown kicking Lex Luger) recently had neck surgery and might never be able to wrestle again. Reader Corrie Jones hopes Arn can come back and help out The Four Horsemen.

This Month In...

The Wrestler

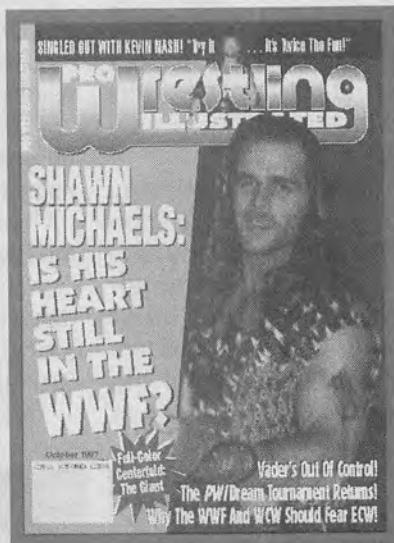


We thought some of the insults **BRET HART** and **SHAWN MICHAELS** hurled each other's way in the last year were bad, but when Shawn superkicked Bret as he got up out of a wheelchair, that was ugly. Now members of **THE HART FOUNDATION** say they plan to get revenge. Could this feud get uglier? ... **"DIAMOND" DALLAS PAGE** would do anything to protect **KIMBERLY** from the NWO's attacks, but now he's worried that they'll get her when he's *not* around ... How can we bring about a reconciliation between **DUSTY** and **DUSTIN RHODES**? We have some suggestions

All this—and much more!—
in the October 1997 issue of
The Wrestler

NOW ON SALE!

PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED



SHAWN MICHAELS took more than three months off this year because he had a bad knee and because he just wasn't happy. Now he's back, and he says he's having fun again, but is he really? Or is he thinking about what life would be like elsewhere—maybe with some old friends? ... Find out why **KEVIN NASH** was happy that his good friend **SCOTT HALL** took some time off this spring ... ECW may be a smaller, less-visible promotion than both the WWF and WCW, but we'll tell you why both should fear ECW ... Check out our full-color centerfold of **THE GIANT**!

All this—and much more!—
in the October 1997 issue of
Pro Wrestling Illustrated

NOW ON SALE!

On The Road

(Continued from page 10)

"But you said you didn't meet with anybody from the NWO and never had any interest in doing so?" I said. "Isn't that what you said?"

"I do not know what I said. I only know what happened. They made offer, and I refused. They made a bigger offer, and I refused. They made the biggest offer, and I accepted."

Now I knew that my inklings about Muto were correct: *We know what you are. Now we just have to establish a price.* Muto was for sale, just like all of the other Japanese and American wrestlers who have been bought by the NWO. Randy Savage, Masa

Chono, Marcus Bagwell, Syxx. The list goes on. "Diamond" Dallas Page resisted, but was that only because the NWO never made him a big enough offer? Probably so. It seems as if Ted DiBiase was right all along: Everybody has a price.

"So, what was the offer?" I asked.

"That is none of your business," he answered. "You do not need to know that."

"You said no to Sonny Ono and the Steiners?"

"I told Sonny Ono we had a deal, but I was just using him all along," he said. "I ignored the Steiners."

"And you're in the NWO for life?"

"Who knows what is for life? I do not know what tomorrow brings. And you ask too many questions. Now go home. Get out of here! Muto is sick of you."

Fine, because I was sick of Muto. I headed south across town toward Underground Atlanta, grabbed a bite to eat at Johnny Rockets, and realized how good hamburgers and french fries taste after a week of sushi and tempura. But there was little time to waste. The Travelodge beckoned, but so did an early-evening flight back home. Finally, I had my story. Saks would be happy. But I wondered, *Could I get away with putting a vanilla shake on my expense report?* □

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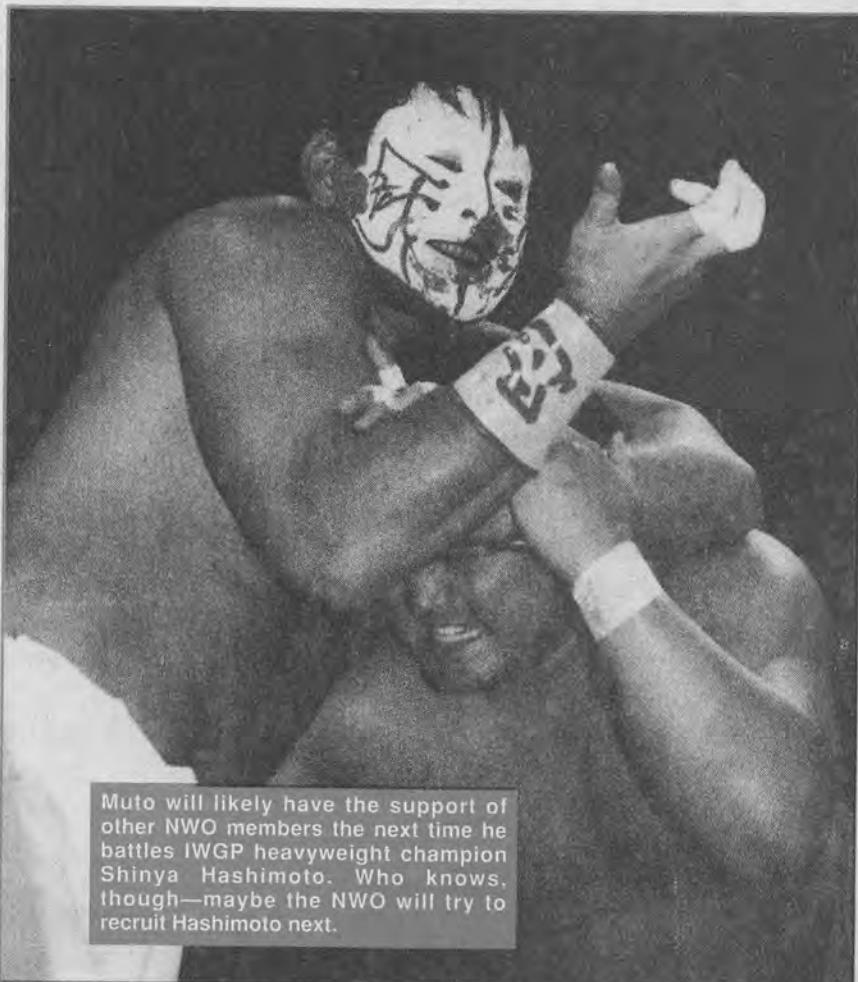
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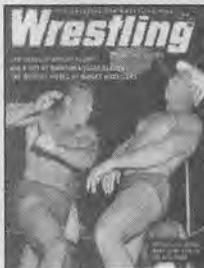
Muto will likely have the support of other NWO members the next time he battles IWGP heavyweight champion Shinya Hashimoto. Who knows, though—maybe the NWO will try to recruit Hashimoto next.

COLLECTOR'S CORNER

Wrestling historians, rejoice! Some of the back issues in this ad have not been offered for sale for more than a decade—but a recent transfer of warehouse inventory from New York to Pennsylvania uncovered a small supply of these classic publications! Obviously, supplies are extremely limited, so all magazines will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis only. Prices quoted are based on the rarity of the issue and the number of available copies. For speediest service, use VISA or MasterCard or make payment by money order or certified check. Please don't send cash! Don't miss out on this once-in-a-lifetime chance to own a memorable piece of wrestling history! Once they're gone, they'll never be offered for sale again—so order today!

WRESTLING REVUE

Published between 1959 and 1964, *Wrestling Revue* is acknowledged as one of the finest series of wrestling magazines ever produced. These beautiful editions, all edited and published by Stanley Weston (founder of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated*, *The Wrestler*, and *Inside Wrestling*, among so many other titles) set a standard for all wrestling magazines that followed, and are available now for the first time in many years!



Fall 1961 Edouard Carpentier challenges Floyd Patterson, Bruiser vs. Cowboy Bob Ellis, The Zebra Kid, killer holds, action at The Kiel, Nick Bockwinkel vs. Dr. X, and full-color action of the Bastiens vs. Shires & Nelson. \$25

December 1961 An extensive Buddy Rogers interview, Bobo Brazil, Fred Blassie, Pepper Gomez, the Torres brothers, Whipper Watson, "Sailor" Art Thomas, Ricki Starr, plus a full-color centerfold of Mark Lewin & Don Curtis. \$35

February 1962 Dick Beyer, Mitsu Arakawa, Edouard Carpentier vs. Lou Thesz, Angelo Poffo, five-girl battle royal, Don and Jackie Fargo, Billy Zabyszko, Larry Chene, plus a full-color centerfold of Guy & Joe Brunetti. \$30

April 1962 Wilbur Snyder, Luis Martinez, Madison Square Garden closeup, Yulie Brynner, Billy Wolfe, Don Leo Jonathan vs. Pat O'Connor, closeup on midgets, plus a full-color centerfold of Bearcat Wright. \$30

June 1962 Eddie Graham, Verne Gagne, wrestlers vs. boxers, Dory Dixon, Yukon Eric, Tony Lanza, Lorraine Johnson vs. Kay Noble, Skull Murphy & Brutie Bernard, The Crusher, plus a full-color centerfold of Red Bastien. \$25

December 1963 The Destroyer, "Maniac" Mark Lewin, Paul Diamond, Ernie Ladd, Judy Grable, Bill Watts, Pat O'Connor, Don Duffy, The Scufflin' Hillbillies, plus a full-color centerfold of Lou Thesz. \$35

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COLLECTOR'S CORNER

WRESTLING REVUE

- Fall 1961
- December 1961
- February 1962
- April 1962
- June 1962
- December 1963
- February 1964

BOXING ILLUSTRATED/ WRESTLING NEWS

- May 1959
- June 1959
- September 1959
- October 1962
- October 1963
- February 1964

BOXING ILLUSTRATED/ WRESTLING NEWS



In November 1958, Stanley Weston launched *Boxing Illustrated/Wrestling News*, an innovative concept in sports magazines. Each issue's content consisted of approximately 60 percent boxing and 40 percent wrestling, resulting in the most complete magazine for ring aficionados the world has ever known.

May 1959 Boxing: Ray Robinson, James Jeffries, Rube Vargas, Willie Pep, Joey Maxim, Denny Moyer. **Wrestling:** Gene Stanlee, Larry Hamilton, Happy Humphrey, "Cowboy" Bob Ellis. \$25

June 1959 Boxing: Gene Fullmer, Jack Britton, Gustav Scholz, Mauro Vazquez, Rocky Graziano. **Wrestling:** Buddy Rogers, Don Leo Jonathan, Hard Boiled Haggerty, Omaya Kato. \$35

September 1959 Boxing: Carmen Basilio, the perfect kayo, Tiger Flowers, Joe Brown, Paolo Rosi. **Wrestling:** Edouard Carpentier, Ricki Starr, Enrique Torres. \$25

October 1962 Boxing: Special edition previewing the Floyd Patterson vs. Sonny Liston bout! **Wrestling:** "Handsome" Johnny Barend, Andre Drapp, "Sailor" Art Thomas, five pages of results. \$30

October 1963 Boxing: Cassius Clay, Joe Lynch, Frankie Narvaez, Tommy Loughran. **Wrestling:** Crusher vs. Verne Gagne, Tony Manous, The Dirty Daltons, results. \$25

February 1964 Boxing: Sonny Liston, Joey Archer, 1963 in review, Cassius Clay. **Wrestling:** Bruno Sammartino vs. Gorilla Monsoon, Emile Dupre, Bruiser vs. Bob Ellis, results. \$30

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Behind the Door

(Continued from page 12)



Some call Goldust the most controversial wrestler of all-time, but he doesn't compare to the man whom Pat Riley, coach of the Miami Heat, calls "the most ridiculous thing to come along in [basketball] ever," says Rosenbaum.

2. Has tattoos all over his body.

Check. Rodman is a walking billboard for something, although I'm not sure for what. I can't see most of his tattoos, because the decorations are black and his skin is brown. Like the earth, which has more water than land, Rodman's body has more tattoos than available space. This makes Rodman much more ridiculous than the numerous wrestlers who have tattoos in the most traditional place (their arms), slightly more ridiculous than Mankind, and as ridiculous as Luna Vachon, who after Rodman is the most ridiculous thing, I think, to come along in the sport ever.

3. Draws attention to himself.

Check. Psychologists say that people who act like Rodman aren't expressing their individuality as much as they're trying to attract attention. Their ridiculous actions are a way of screaming out, "Hey, look at me! I'm different!" when in reality they lack self-esteem and confidence. This makes Rodman more ridiculous than Hulk Hogan, who loves being the center of attention, and as ridiculous as Roddy Piper, who just can't help avoiding the spotlight.

4. Behaves poorly. Check. During this year's NBA playoffs, Rodman was called for at least one

technical foul in 12 straight games. He's always pushing and shoving and trash-talking and taunting and harassing. Rodman has often been suspended by the NBA and this season kicked a courtside photographer in a very private (and vulnerable) area. This makes Rodman as ridiculous as Kevin Nash and Scott Hall, who merely tried to run the Steiner brothers off the road, slightly more ridiculous than most rule-breakers in wrestling history, and less ridiculous than just about anyone in ECW, where mayhem is expected. Rodman would be perfect for a no-disqualification, falls-count-anywhere basketball game.

5. Tries to make it seem as if he isn't that far from the norm. Check. After play-by-play man Marv Albert was arrested for allegedly biting the back of a female acquaintance and forcing her to perform a sex act, Rodman wandered over to Albert on the basketball court and joked, "See, Marv, there's a little freak in all of us." Of course, there is a little freak in most people. There's just a very big freak in Rodman. Unfortunately, this makes Rodman only as ridiculous as 95 percent of all professional wrestlers, who think all people start their sentences with, "Let me tell you something ..." and think it's normal to dive through tables and onto concrete floors.

Maybe Rodman isn't as ridiculous as I think. We'll see as Rodman makes more appearances in the ring and the comparison becomes easier to make. It'll be interesting to see how Rodman acts when he is surrounded by other freaks (something he has had practice for in Hollywood and South Beach).

Now if Goldust ever married Luna Vachon ... then maybe we'd have a real freak. □

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FIGHTERS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

Budweiser

The Insider

(Continued from page 14)

a childhood. He speaks not of a childhood filled with abuse or neglect, but of the days in which he dreamed of competing under the bright lights of the WWF.

I think I know more about Mick Foley than I care to, but it doesn't help me understand several aspects of the Mankind persona. Why the Hannibal Lecter mask? And why is he always pulling hair out of his head? What I get out of it is that Mankind is a bizarre sociopath, but much more well-rounded than any of us could have imagined.

I guess I long for the WWF of old. When wrestlers were not signed—they were invented. Vinnie Mac and his cronies engaged in revisionist history. The kind of history in which wrestlers basically didn't exist before they came to the WWF.

I cannot see anything good coming out of this. It's like a magician revealing to me how he did a trick. I know that there is something more than meets the eye there, but he doesn't have to tell me everything. The wrestlers formerly known as

Cactus and Dustin worked hard to re-establish themselves. Now they are living—actually wallowing—in the past.

Why did they come to the WWF in the first place? They could have stayed in WCW for that.

Call me new school if you wish, but I like the territorial nature of each promotion. It fuels competition, and that improves quality. The WWF and WCW are both giving us some great action and great cards now that they're working so hard to outdo each other. Acknowledging the past is akin to acknowledging the other and almost doling out a certain amount of respect.

I hate that. I really hate that.

Being the queen of all that is dark, I enjoy rancor, dissension, and a little dirty pool. I absolutely loved Eric Bischoff's cheap shots at the WWF and Vince's "Billionaire Ted" retribution. Now where there was once a battery of insults, there is quiet. The WWF would now have you believe that confession is good for the federation's soul. What's next, Vince and Eric joining hands in song?

Perhaps we can hold the floodgates at bay. Maintain the policy of the little white lie coupled with the big, fat colorful deception. For me, professional wrestling is an escape. I want it to be fun, maybe even a little ridiculous at times. I don't want to hear about everyone's problems.

Okay, maybe I am overreacting. I just fail to see the reason for 'Dust and 'Kind airing their reality laundry with the WWF's blessing. A guy like Goldust shouldn't have a wife and a kid. Mankind shouldn't have his elementary school photos on display for all to see. Frankly, it has nothing to do with wrestling. My message is simple and clear:

For crying out loud, don't let the wrestlers be themselves. □



Mankind is not this lunatic's real name. Neither is Cactus Jack. Big surprises there, huh? But just because I do know his real name now doesn't mean I understand him better.

On Assignment

(Continued from page 16)

When they walked in, they caused quite a commotion. But not because of who they are, but because of who they look like. Whispers of, "Look, it's Hall and Nash!" filled the establishment. A few children had to be restrained by the bar's management. They called out to their "heroes." Except they didn't call out for Razor and Diesel. They were calling for Scott and Kevin.

The looks on their faces told the whole story as they approached my table. They were growing tired of the instances of mistaken identity. They refused all autograph requests, knowing that when fans saw the scrawl, they would be disappointed.

Without a word, the two of them sat down. Funny, in street clothes, they look even more like their counterparts. No wonder the airport crowd was confused.

"You wanted to talk to us?" The New Diesel said as he hailed a waitress.

"I just wanted to see what was new with you guys," I responded. "Haven't seen much of you since you left the WWF."

"Isn't that funny?" The New Razor said with that distinctive Hispanic accent of his. "Your magazine was never interested in us except to mock our every move. And that 'New' crap doesn't go over well with us, either."

"So what happened?" I inquired. "You guys were challenging for the WWF tag team title and then—poof—you were gone."

"The WWF feared us," said New Diesel, taking a sip from his beer. "Like Frankenstein created the monster, they made us in an image that suited them. We were more than up for the task of making others forget about those other guys. But the WWF wasn't."

"No lie, chico," said New Razor.

"We force them to look at our record and give us a title match. The minute we lose on a major pay-per-view, we're old news. We gave up our own identities and careers—"

"For this charade?" I replied, trying to finish his sentence.

"It was no charade," responded New Razor. "A lot of people had big expectations for us, and we met them, man. Now when people think about Razor Ramon and Diesel, they think of us."

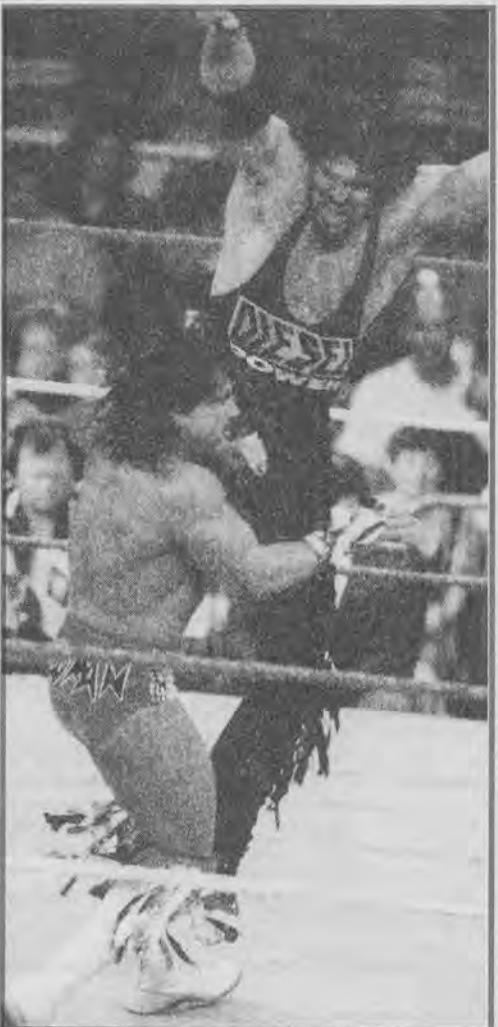
"Why did you continue with these personas after you left the WWF?" I asked. "And how much longer do you think you can continue?"

Neither New Diesel nor New Razor responded right away. They just stared blankly at me for a few seconds. After a very pregnant pause, Razor chimed in with a response.

"I can't speak for 'Big Daddy,' but I'm not sure," the New "Bad Guy" said, his Hispanic accent fading just a bit. "I think it's time to just be myself. We proved our point, but I'm about ready to move on. I ain't sure we even need to be a team anymore."

At that point, I thought I saw a little anger flashing in New Diesel's eyes, but it quickly passed. And with that, both men mumbled their goodbyes and walked away. I couldn't help but feel sorry for them. The WWF they had entered was not the WWF that they had left. Just when they had started to fit into their used wrestling attire, the federation decided it didn't have a use for them anymore.

Footnote: Just weeks after I conducted this interview, The New Razor appeared on a USWA tele-



The New Diesel did surprisingly well against Marc Mero when he came to the WWF, and he and Razor were effective as a team for a while. Both, however, eventually seemed to miss having their own unique identities.

cast and, after being attacked by Mike Samples and his gang of thugs, told a Memphis audience that perhaps he didn't want to be the WWF-created "Bad Guy" anymore. New Diesel, meanwhile, started using the name Unibomb for a while, and there was talk that the two men weren't getting along. I thought back to our meeting, and for the first time, I was truly impressed by these young men. They were finally starting to be themselves. □

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Zbyszko, Earthquake, Ultimate Warrior, Jeff Jarrett.

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July 1991: Hogan's Burning Mad! Beating Slaughter For The Title Was Not Enough. Also: Virgil, Nasty, Steiners, Dan Spivey, Terry Funk.

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January 1993 (Special Edition): 80,355 Fans Can't Be Wrong: This Was The Greatest SummerSlam Ever! Also: WWF-USWA, LOD, Sting-Simmons, Bret-Shango, Rude-Dustin.

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November 1993: Flair ("I'm The Man Again!) vs. Rude ("You Mean You Were The Man.") Plus: Heavenly Bodies, Marty Jannetty, Rude-Flair, Hulk Hogan, Vader & Vicious, Lex Liger.

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February 1994: Our Holiday Wish List For 1994. Plus: Hogan-Savage-Bret, Hacksaw Duggan, Doinks, Hollywood Blonds, Steven Regal.

March 1994: Inside Wrestling Predicts: What's In Store For '94. Plus: Nastys & Missy, Col. Parker, Ludvig Borgo, chairs, Survivor Series, Diesel-Michaels.

April 1994 (Special Issue): The Inside Wrestling Computer Tournament. Also: Lex Luger, Starrcade, Yoko-Fuji, Ric Flair, Curt Hennig, Funk-Sabu.

May 1994: Lex Luger & Bret Hart: Their Greatest Triumphs, Their Gravest Tragedies. Also: Flair-Rude, Rick Morton, Heenan-Bockwinkel, Brian Christopher, Yoko-Booger.

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October 1994 (Special Issue): WCW Midyear Report. Also: Doink, Vader-Race, Mabel, Dory Funk Jr., Owen-Bret, Hall of Fame.

December 1994: Hogan In Paradise ... And Ric Flair Feels The Thunder. Also: Bret-Owen, Rottens, Cactus, AAA midgets, Sparky Plugg, Domi E. Allen

February 1995: It's Getting Ugly: Wrestling's Losing Its Greatest Heroes. Also: Sting, McMahon-Lawler, Cactus-Tommy, Woman, Brutus-Hogan, Valentine-Doink.

March 1995: Predictions 1995. Also: Nastys, Razor Ramon, Tasmania, Kid-Man O'-War, Pillman & Hogan.

April 1995 (Special Issue): The 1995 Inside Wrestling Computer Tournament! Also: Diesel, Vader-Austin, Lex Luger, Jerry Lawler, Johnny B. Badd, Al Snow.

June 1995: The Beginning Of The End? Will Hulk Hogan Get Burned By Friendly Fire? Also: Steve Austin, Gangstas, Public Enemy, Bret-Owen, Jeff Jarrett.

July 1995 (Special Issue): Wrestling Cool!!! What's In—And Why—in The Mat Sport Today. Also: Savage & Sting, Alex Wright, Bruise Brothers, Dan Severn, Ivan Putski.

August 1995: The Untold Truth: WrestleMania X—The Winners And Losers. Also: Johnny B. Badd, Bam Bam Bigelow, John Studd, Bubba-Sting.

October 1995 (Special Issue): WCW Midyear Report. Also: Randy Savage, Bret & Cactus, Sting, Diesel, Hawk.

November 1995: One Defense In Four Months? Strip Hulk Hogan Of The Title—Now! Also: Alex Wright, Tatanka, King of Ring, Chris Benoit, Backlund-Clinton.

December 1995: White With Fright, Green With Envy: Why The Undertaker Had To Bury Kama. Also: Vader-Hogan, Warrior-Renegade, Gangstas-PE, Waylon Mercy, Heavenly Bodies.

January 1996: Our Holiday Wish List For 1996! Also: Scott Norton, Sid Vicious, Psicosis-Misterio, Barry Horowitz, Sabu.

February 1996: Wrestling's Top Stars: What 1996 Has In Store For Them! Also: Goldust, Sherri-Parker, Mikey Whipwreck, Smokin' Gunn.

March 1996: His Excellency! How Bret Masterminded Diesel's Execution. Also: Jeff Jarrett, Giant, Jim Cornette, Survivor Series, Eddy Guerrero.

April 1996 (Special Issue): The 1996 Inside Wrestling Computer Tournament. Also: Bret-Ultimate, Four Horsemen, British Bulldog, Randy Savage, Sabu.

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June 1996: Luger Or Hogan? If Sting Makes The Wrong Choice, He's Through! Also: Road Warriors, Roddy Piper, Ahmed Johnson, Raven, Al Snow

July 1996 (Special Issue): Warrior: Why He'll Save The WWF; Why He'll Sink The WWF. Also: Top stars answer personal questions, Diesel-Hogan, Dallas Page, Bret Hart.

August 1996: The Greening Of Wrestling: How Sting & Shawn Will Become \$50,000,000 Men! Also: Bodydonnas, Giant, Guerrero-Misterio, George Steele, Goldust & Marlene.

September 1996: She's No Boob! Sunny: More Than Just Sex Appeal. Also: Lawler-Jarrett, 911, Brian Pillman, Alex Wright, championship chaos.

October 1996 (Special Issue): WCW Midyear Report. Also: Jake Roberts, Yokozuna, Giant-Komon, Ahmed Johnson, Chris Jericho, strutters.

November 1996: The Steiners: Feasting On A Buffet Of Violence. Also: Shawn Michaels, Sabu-Douglas, King of Ring, Eddy Guerrero, truck stop terror.

December 1996: Three Women For Four Horsemen? The Hot Search For A Fourth Filly Has Begun! Also: Sunny & Gunn, Giant, Goldust, Cornette & Hart, Jerry Jarrett.

Holiday 1996 (Special Issue): The Tombstone: Wrestling's Deadliest Finisher. Also: 1997 calendar, "Psycho" Sid, Benoit-Misterio, Steiners-NWO, Pit Bull I, Jushin Liger.

January 1997: Dreaming Of A Sunny Christmas ... Our Holiday Wish List For The Stars. Also: Michaels & Undertaker, Sting, Barry Windham, Faarooq, NWO.

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March 1997: Why Bret's Execution Will Be Excellent By WrestleMania Also: Roddy Piper, Syxx, Survivor Series, Steve Austin, talent scouts.

April 1997 (Special Issue): The 1997 Inside Wrestling Computer Tournament. Also: Helmsley-Marlena-Sable, Nasty Boys, Flash Funk, Taz, Rick Steiner.

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June 1997: Ahmed Johnson Reveals: "I Almost Joined The Nation Of Domination." Also: Mankind, Lex Luger, NWO, Davey Boy Smith, Jerry Graham.

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INSIDE WRESTLING

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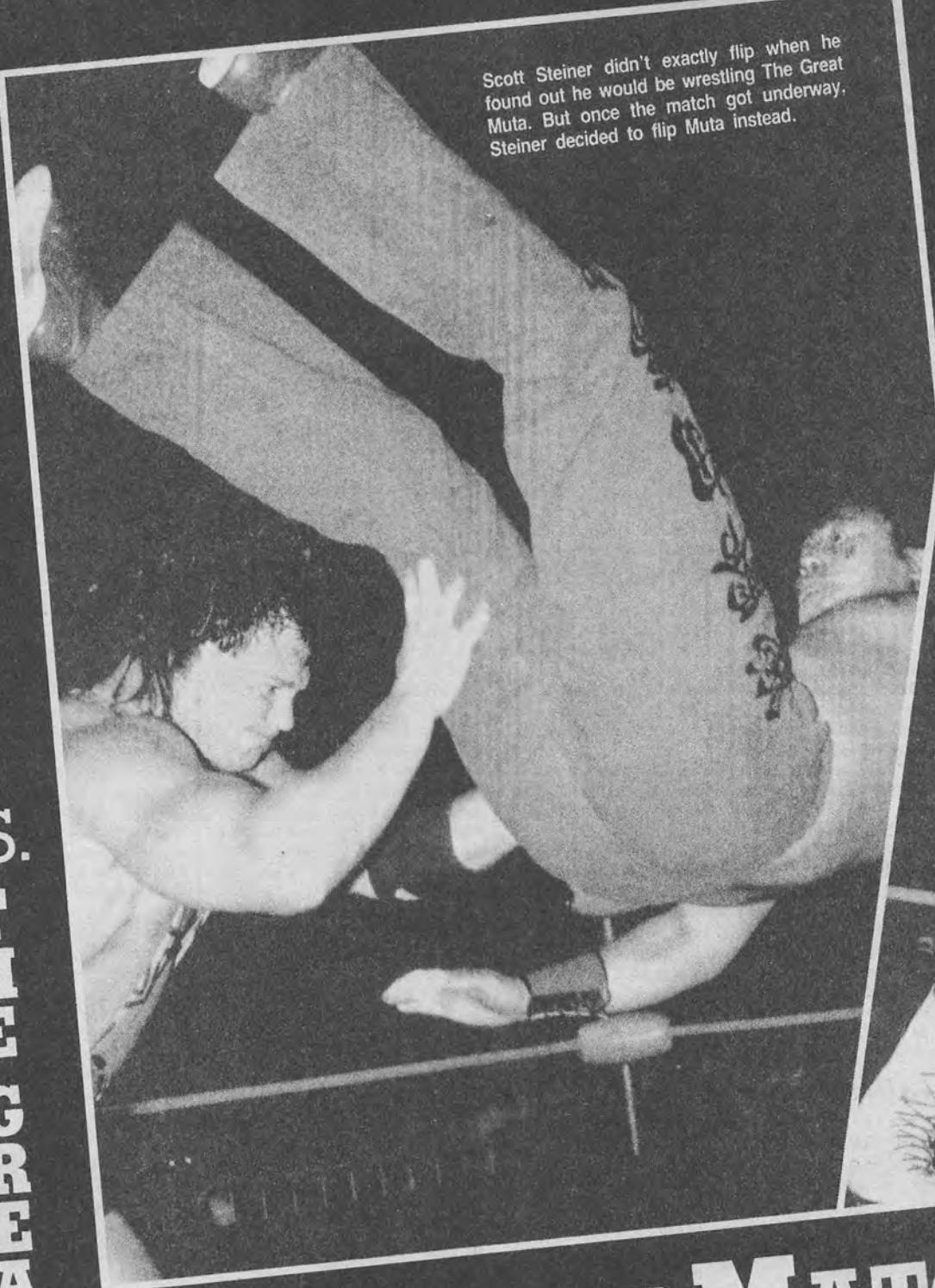
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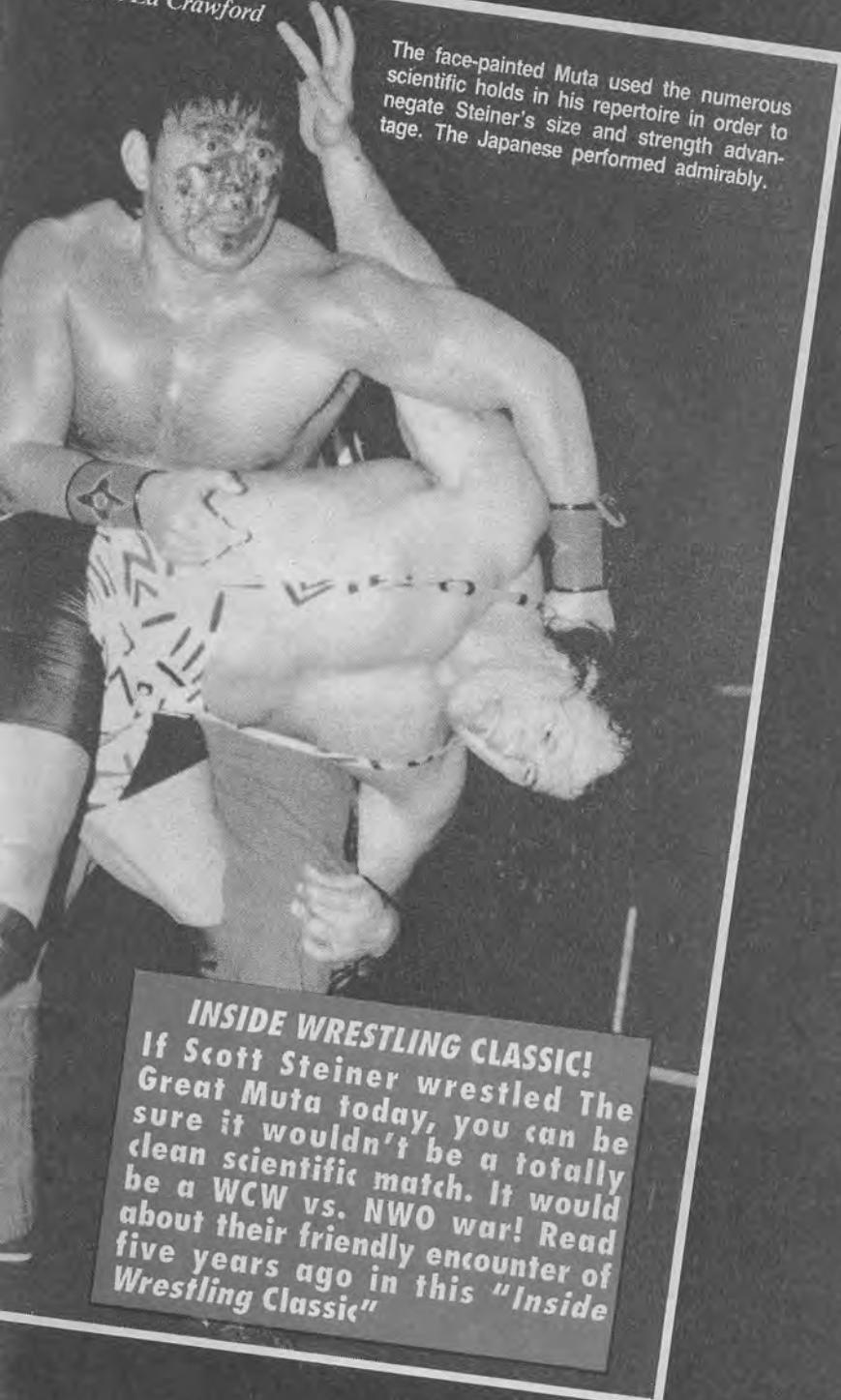
**SCOTT STEINER
VS.
THE GREAT
MUTA**



Scott Steiner didn't exactly flip when he found out he would be wrestling The Great Muta. But once the match got underway, Steiner decided to flip Muta instead.

Photos

**THE FLUKE MATCH
THAT BECAME A
CLASSIC!**



The face-painted Muta used the numerous scientific holds in his repertoire in order to negate Steiner's size and strength advantage. The Japanese performed admirably.

INSIDE WRESTLING CLASSIC!
If Scott Steiner wrestled The Great Muta today, you can be sure it wouldn't be a totally clean scientific match. It would be a WCW vs. NWO war! Read about their friendly encounter of five years ago in this "Inside Wrestling Classic."

On this night at The Omni, Scott Steiner was not scheduled to wrestle The Great Muta. Actually, he didn't know who his opponent would be. After the match was over, though, nearly everyone in attendance realized they had just witnessed one of the year's greatest bouts!

By Andy Rodriguez

SCOTT STEINER WASN'T displaying much patience. Sitting in The Omni locker room before the start of the card, Scott laughed and joked with his brother Rick. At the same time, he fidgeted nervously.

"I don't like this, Rick," he said to his older brother. "You know, I have to know who I'm gonna wrestle. This whole thing with the battle royal is too unpredictable. Who knows what could happen?"

The "whole thing" to which Scott referred was a 20-man battle royal with an unusual stipulation: After the first eight men were eliminated, the last 12 would have to wrestle in singles matches later that night in the order in which they were eliminated. For example, the ninth man out would have to wrestle the 10th man out, the 11th out would wrestle the 12th, and so on.

Steiner did not appreciate this novel approach to matchmaking.

"Hey, man, I'll wrestle anybody in the world, even you," Scott said as he pointed at Rick. "What I don't like is not having the time to prepare for a particular guy. It really bugs me!"

"C'mon, Scotty," Rick retorted. "You know all these guys pretty well. Why do you need so much time to get ready for them? You're too wound up. Hey, you might not even have to wrestle again. You might be one of the first eight guys out."

Scott shot his brother a cold glance. Then he slipped back into deep thought.

Scott was not among the first eight men eliminated in the battle royal. When he did go out, he went out in tandem with The Great Muta.

"Do you see who I have to wrestle?" Scott shouted to Rick. "Muta! How am I supposed to prepare for him? The guy knows more moves

than just about anybody going today. This isn't fair. This isn't fair at all."

"Hey, what's your problem?" Rick shot back. "Stop bellyaching and get with the program! I can't figure you out, man. You know Muta well. You don't have anything to worry about."

Scott was barely listening.

In the same locker room, Muta sat quietly, almost in meditation. He had faced Steiner before, but not under such circumstances. He, too, did not particularly appreciate the idea of contesting a match against one of the sport's toughest and most respected athletes. But he wasn't complaining.

"These are the rules," said Muta through an interpreter. "I fully understood them when I stepped into the ring. I may not like them, but there they are. I accept them and go on. My intention now is to wrestle the best match I possibly can."

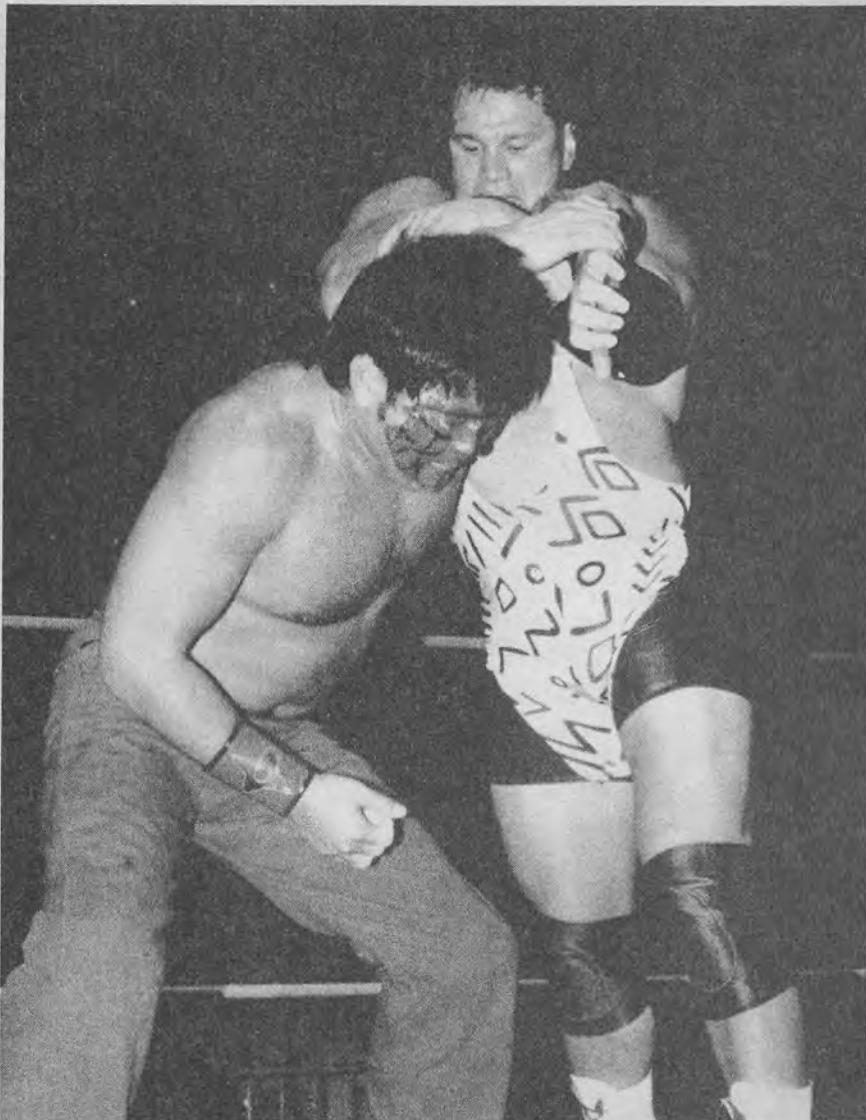
Muta sat silently for a few more minutes. Then he began the walk to the ring.

There was no animosity between the two when the match began. They shook hands and then went about their business. And what business it was. The match was full of the moves and maneuvers, the holds and counterholds, that have made these men famous.

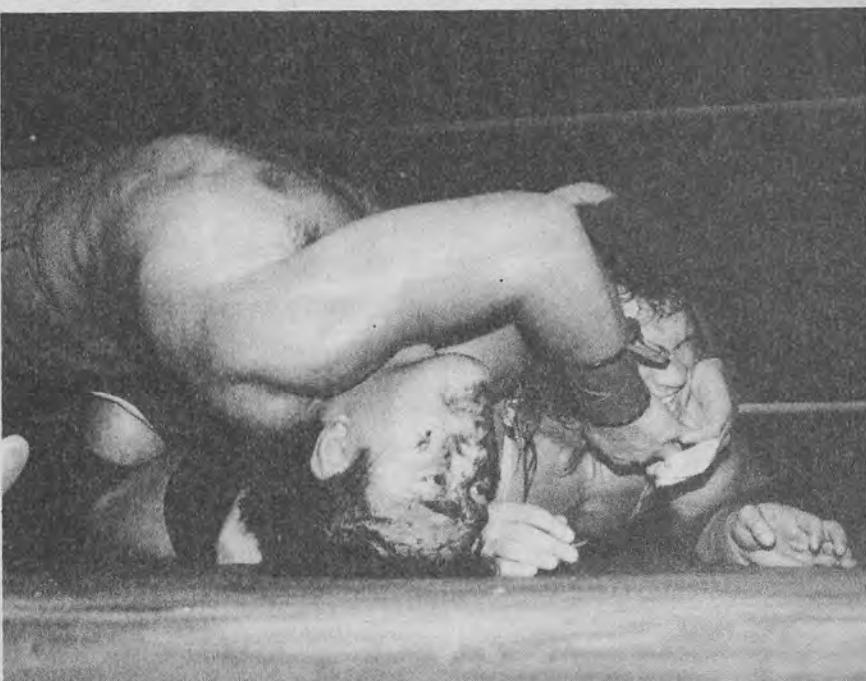
At several points during the match, both men lost their tempers. The occasional outbursts of anger, though, did not mar the proceedings. They both concentrated on wrestling, not arguing. Who would have expected less?

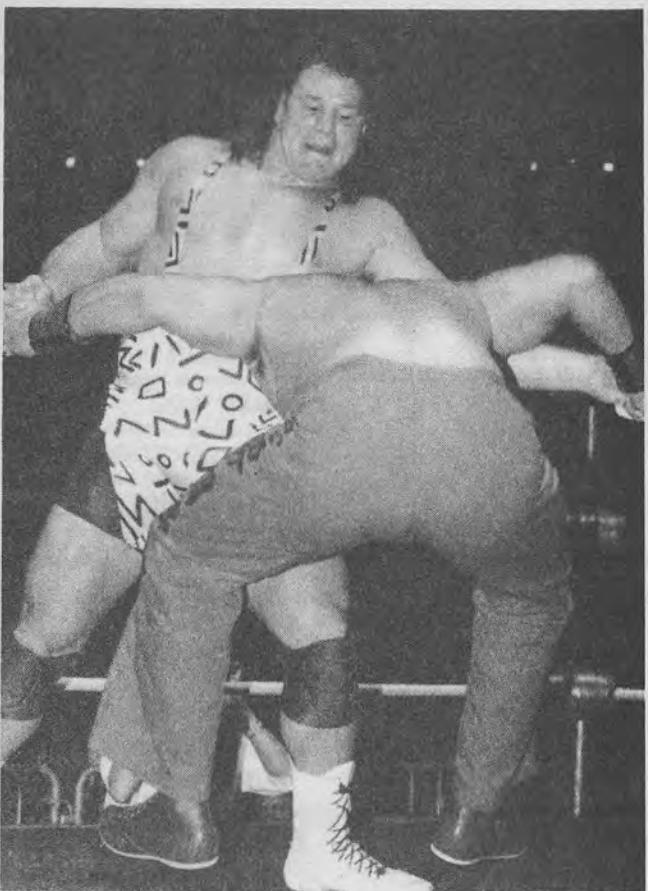
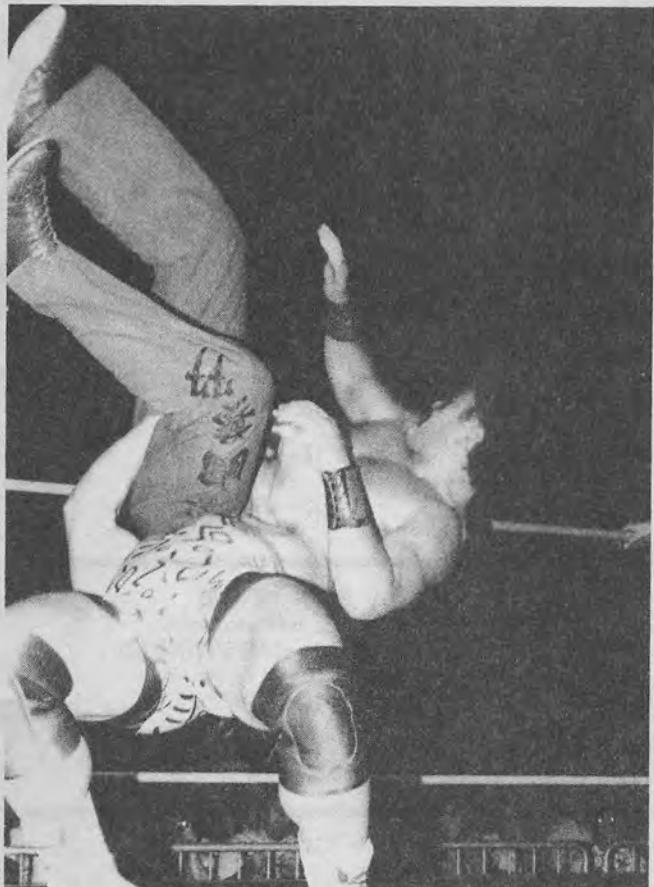
When Steiner whipped Muta across the ring in preparation for the "Frankensteiner," Muta held on to the ropes and avoided Scott's clutch. Steiner moved in for a clothesline, but Muta ducked and Scott went flying over the ropes.

For more than 15 minutes, they fought with this kind of intensity. After Muta blasted Steiner with an

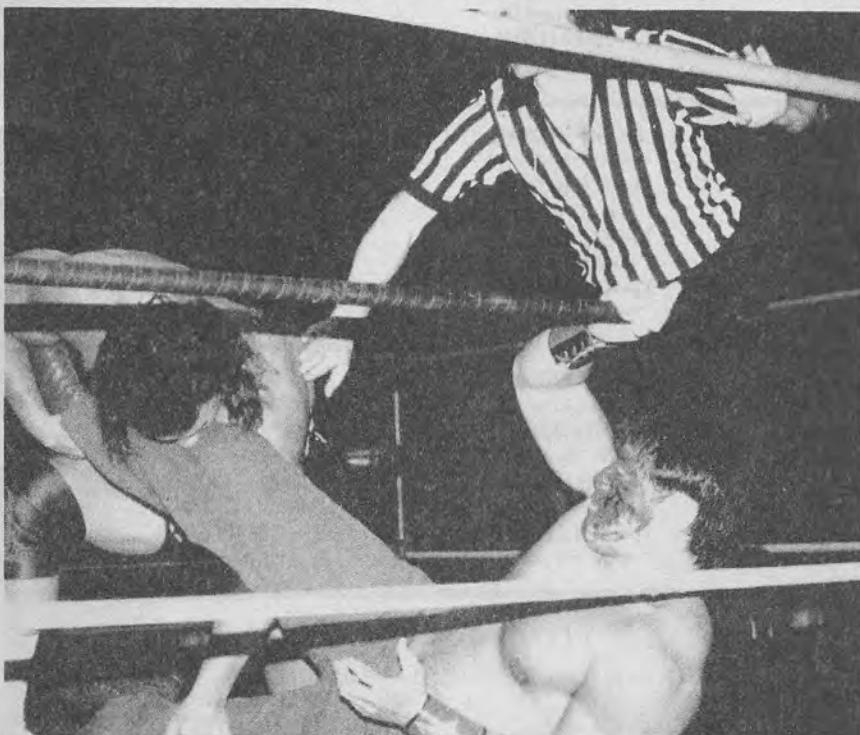


Steiner concentrates his efforts on Muta's left arm (above). Muta reverses the move, and moments later applies a chinlock while in a bridge position (below).





Steiner suplexes Muta (above left) and overpowers him in a test of strength (above right). He attempts to put Muta in a leglock, but the savvy veteran grabs the ropes (below).



elbow and a sidekick, he mounted the top turnbuckle with the intention of delivering the winning blow. But as he swooped down, Steiner caught him with a bearhug, then

supplexed him to the mat and covered him for the pin.

Muta was gracious in defeat. As the referee raised Steiner's hand in victory, the Japanese sensation

shook Scott's hands and embraced him. A classic match had ended with class.

Back in the locker room, Steiner showered off, then wondered why he had worried so much just 45 minutes before.

"Man, I love to have this type of competition every night!" Scott enthused. "This is why you become a wrestler, so you can have great matches like this. Yeah, it got tough in there, but so what? After tonight, I have even more respect for Muta. Hey, these battle royal deals aren't too bad after all. Wonder who I'll wrestle next time?"

Scott and his brother were discussing the match when Muta walked over to them and patted Scott on the back. He spoke, in English.

"Good match, Scott, good match," he said haltingly. "Someday we do it again."

Scott smiled.

"Yeah, buddy," he answered. "Someday. Yeah, someday." □

INSIDE WRESTLING'S

OFFICIAL RATINGS

TOP 15

1—THE UNDERTAKER

(1) WWF World champion

2—LEX LUGER

(4) No. 2 contender: WCW World title

3—STEVE AUSTIN

(5) No. 2 contender: WWF World title

4—JEFF JARRETT

(-) U.S. heavyweight champion

5—RANDY SAVAGE

(-) No. 3 contender: WCW World title

6—HUNTER HEARST HELMSLEY

(-) No. 5 contender: WWF World title

7—DIAMOND DALLAS PAGE

(15) No. 5 contender: WCW World title

8—OWEN HART

(3) WWF Intercontinental champion

9—DAVEY BOY SMITH

(-) No. 3 contender: WWF World title

10—TERRY FUNK

(11) ECW heavyweight champion

11—CHRIS BENOIT

(-) No. 6 contender: WCW World title

12—DEAN MALENKO

(2) No. 4 contender: WCW World title

13—THE GIANT

(8) No. 5 contender: WCW World title

14—TAZ

(-) ECW TV champion

15—SYXX

(6) WCW cruiserweight champion

WCW

1—HULK HOGAN

(1) 275, Venice Beach, CA

2—JEFF JARRETT

(5) 230, Nashville, TN

3—LEX LUGER

(8) 265, Chicago, IL

4—RANDY SAVAGE

(-) 237, Sarasota, FL

5—DEAN MALENKO

(2) 216, Tampa, FL

6—DIAMOND DALLAS PAGE

(12) 260, Tampa, FL

7—CHRIS BENOIT

(13) 218, Edmonton, Alberta

8—ULTIMO DRAGON

(11) 175, Mexico City, Mexico

9—SYXX

(7) 212, Minneapolis, MN

10—MENG

(4) 294, Tonga

11—KONNAN

(-) 237, Mexico City, Mexico

12—THE GIANT

(6) 430, parts unknown

13—LORD STEVEN REGAL

(3) 247, Blackpool, England

14—REY MISTERIO JR.

(9) 140, San Diego, CA

15—CHRIS JERICHO

(-) 225, Vancouver, British Columbia

WWF

1—THE UNDERTAKER

(1) 328, parts unknown

2—OWEN HART

(2) 227, Calgary, Alberta

3—STEVE AUSTIN

(3) 241, Dallas, TX

4—DAVEY BOY SMITH

(-) 245, Leeds, England

5—GOLDUST

(9) 254, Austin, TX

6—HUNTER HEARST HELMSLEY

(7) 279, Greenwich, CT

7—MANKIND

(5) 277, Truth or Consequences, NM

8—AHMED JOHNSON

(6) 305, Pearl River, MS

9—FAAROOQ

(4) 291, Perry, GA

10—BRIAN PILLMAN

(-) 226, Cincinnati, OH

11—JERRY LAWLER

(-) 234, Memphis, TN

12—SAVIO VEGA

(8) 260, Vega Alta, Puerto Rico

13—ROCKABILLY

(-) 256, Austin, TX

14—CRUSH

(11) 322, Kona, HI

15—SID VICIOUS

(-) 318, West Memphis, AR

ECW

1—TERRY FUNK

(-) 247, Amarillo, TX

2—TAZ

(-) 248, Red Hook, NY

3—TOMMY DREAMER

(-) 245, Yonkers, NY

4—SHANE DOUGLAS

(-) 240, Pittsburgh, PA

5—SABU

(-) 220, Bombay, India

6—ROB VAN DAM

(-) 227, Battle Creek, MI

7—CHRIS CANDIDO

(-) 226, Carteret, NJ

8—THE SANDMAN

(-) 244, Philadelphia, PA

9—B. MAHONEY

(-) 361, Carteret, NJ

10—AXL ROTTEN

(-) 302, Philadelphia, PA

11—CHRIS CHETTI

(-) 227, Amityville, NY

12—MIKEY WHIPWRECK

(-) 187, New York, NY

13—BUH BUH RAY DUDLEY

(-) 325, parts unknown

14—D-VON DUDLEY

(-) 260, parts unknown

15—JOHN KRONUS

(-) 250, Boston, MA

INTERNATIONAL

1—MITSUHARU MISAWA

(-) 228, Saitama, Japan

2—TOSHIAKI KAWADA

(-) 245, Tizhigi, Japan

3—SHINYA HASHIMOTO

(-) 287, Gisu, Japan

4—KENTA KOBASHI

(-) 261, Tokyo, Japan

5—ULTIMO DRAGON

(-) 175, Tokyo, Japan

6—SHINJIRO OTANI

(-) 215, Yokohama, Japan

7—JUSHIN LIGER

(-) 206, Hiroshima, Japan

8—REY MISTERIO JR.

(-) 140, San Diego, CA

9—KEIJI MUTO

(-) 245, Tokyo, Japan

10—JUN AKIYAMA

(-) 230, Hiroshima, Japan

11—KOJI KANEMOTO

(-) 205, Tokyo, Japan

12—PSICOSIS

(-) 200, Tijuana, Mexico

13—JUVENTUD GUERRERA

(-) 165, Mexico City, Mexico

14—DAVE FINDLAY

(-) 231, Belfast, Ireland

15—YOSHI TAMURA

(-) 191, Tokyo, Japan

TOP 15 TAG TEAMS

1—SCOTT HALL & KEVIN NASH

(-) WCW World tag team champions

2—THE ROAD WARRIORS

(1) No. 1 contenders: WWF World tag title

3—HARLEM HEAT

(5) No. 1 contenders: WCW World tag title

4—RICK & SCOTT STEINER

(3) No. 2 contenders: WCW World tag title

5—THE GIANT & LEX LUGER

(11) No. 3 contenders: WCW World tag title

6—THE ELIMINATORS

(4) ECW tag team champions

7—THE BLACKJACKS

(7) No. 2 contenders: WWF World tag title

8—HENRY & PHINEAS GODWINN

(6) No. 3 contenders: WWF World tag title

9—SABU & ROB VAN DAM

(13) No. 1 contenders: ECW tag title

10—THE HEADBANGERS

(15) No. 4 contenders: WWF World tag title

11—THE GANGSTAS

(8) No. 2 contenders: ECW tag title

12—PUBLIC ENEMY

(-) No. 4 contenders: WCW World tag title

13—BUH BUH RAY & D-VON DUDLEY

(-) No. 3 contenders: ECW tag title

14—THE PIT BULLS

(-) No. 4 contenders: ECW tag title

15—THE AMAZING FRENCH-CANADIANS

(-) No. 5 contenders: WCW World tag title

These ratings are compiled by the editors with the assistance of promoters, wrestlers, and reporters around the country, and are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and the inherent skill of each wrestler. The number in parentheses indicates a wrestler's position in that category last issue; (-) indicates that the wrestler was not rated in that category last issue... "Most Popular" and "Most Hated" ratings are based on nationwide surveys of wrestling fans and on mail that comes to our offices ... Championships highlighted in bold on the "Roll Call Of Champions" have changed hands since our previous issue ... The information under the championship listing indicates the date that champion won the title, who the former champion was, and where the match took place.

For period ended June 23, 1997

ROLL CALL OF CHAMPIONS

ALL-JAPAN INTERNATIONAL CHAMPION: MITSUHARU MISAWA
(January 20, 1997; from Kenta Kobashi; Osaka, Japan)

ALL-JAPAN INTERNATIONAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

JOHNNY ACE & KENTA KOBASHI
(May 27, 1997; from Toshiaki Kawada & Akira Taue; Sapporo, Japan)

ALL-JAPAN UNITED NATIONAL CHAMPION: MITSUHARU MISAWA
(January 20, 1997; from Kenta Kobashi; Osaka, Japan)

ALL-JAPAN WOMEN'S ALL-PACIFIC CHAMPION: TAKAKO INOUE
(November 21, 1996; from Reggie Bennett; Kobe, Japan)

ALL-JAPAN WOMEN'S CHAMPION: RIE TAMADA
(November 21, 1996; from Kumiko Maekawa; Kobe, Japan)

ALL-JAPAN WOMEN'S TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:
CHIKAYA NAGASHIMA & SUGAR SATO
(September 1, 1996; from Yumi Fukawa & Rie Tamada; Tokyo, Japan)

ECW HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: TERRY FUNK
(April 13, 1997; from Raven; Philadelphia, PA)

ECW TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: THE ELIMINATORS
(April 13, 1997; from Buh Buh Ray & D-Von Dudley; Philadelphia, PA)

ECW TELEVISION CHAMPION: TAZ
(June 7, 1997; from Shane Douglas; Philadelphia, PA)

IWGP HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: SHINYA HASHIMOTO
(April 29, 1996; from Nobuhiko Takada; Tokyo, Japan)

IWGP INTERNATIONAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:
SATOSHI KOJIMA & MANABU NAKANISHI
(May 3, 1997; from Riki Choshu & Kensuke Sasaki; Osaka, Japan)

IPWA HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: BIG SLAM
(January 11, 1997; beat Guido Falcone; Pikeville, NC)

MID-EASTERN WRESTLING FEDERATION LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION:
ADAM FLASH
(March 2, 1997; beat Steve Corino & Quinn Nash in three-way match; Baltimore, MD)

MID-EASTERN WRESTLING FEDERATION MID-ATLANTIC CHAMPION: QUINN NASH
(June 1, 1997; from Jimmy Cicero; Baltimore, MD)

NWA HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: DAN SEVERN
(February 24, 1995; from Chris Candido; Erlanger, KY)

NWA NORTH AMERICAN HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: RECKLESS YOUTH
(June 14, 1997; from Ace Darling; Vineland, NJ)

NWA U.S. TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: THE MISFITS
(June 14, 1997; from The Beach Bums; Vineland, NJ)

PACIFIC WRESTLING FEDERATION HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: MITSUHARU MISAWA
(January 20, 1997; from Kenta Kobashi; Osaka, Japan)

PACIFIC WRESTLING FEDERATION JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION:
YOSHINARI OGAWA
(January 15, 1997; from Tsuyoshi Kikuchi; Tokyo, Japan)

PACIFIC WRESTLING FEDERATION TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:
TOSHIAKI KAWADA & AKIRA TAUE
(January 17, 1997; from Johnny Ace & Steve Williams; Matsumoto, Japan)

PENNSYLVANIA CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION:
CHEETAH MASTER
(April 4, 1997; from Julio Sanchez; Reading, PA)

PENNSYLVANIA CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION:
JUDD THE STUD
(March 7, 1997; from Pat Shamrock; Reading, PA)

PENNSYLVANIA CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:
ACE DARLING & GLEN OSBOURNE
(December 27, 1996; from Double Delight; Reading, PA)

PRO WRESTLING FEDERATION HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: ITALIAN STALLION
(February 22, 1997; from George South; Morganton, NC)

PRO WRESTLING FEDERATION JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: MADD MAXXINE
(August 24, 1996; beat Black Angel; Forest City, NC)

PRO WRESTLING FEDERATION TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: THE BLACK DRAGONS
(June 20, 1997; from Flaming Youth & Masked Maniac; Morganton, NC)

TRI-STAR WRESTLING HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: TITLE HELD UP
(Most recently held by Jimmy Sharpe)

TRI-STAR WRESTLING TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: CHUCK COLT & RICK JUSTICE
(May 10, 1996; from The New One Man Gang & Joel Travis; Rossville, GA)

USWA HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: JERRY LAWLER
(April 27, 1997; from King Reginald; Memphis, TN)

USWA SOUTHERN CHAMPION: BILLY TRAVIS
(June 14, 1997; from Brian Christopher; Memphis, TN)

USWA TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: TITLE VACANT
(Last held by The Truth Commission)

WCW CRUISERWEIGHT CHAMPION: SYXX
(February 23, 1997; from Dean Malenko; San Francisco, CA)

WCW TELEVISION CHAMPION: LORD STEVEN REGAL
(May 18, 1997; from Ultimo Dragon; Charlotte, NC)

WCW U.S. CHAMPION: JEFF JARRETT
(June 9, 1997; from Dean Malenko; Boston, MA)

WCW WORLD CHAMPION: HULK HOGAN
(August 10, 1996; from The Giant; Sturgis, SD)

WCW WORLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: SCOTT HALL & KEVIN NASH
(October 27, 1996; from Harlem Heat; Las Vegas, NV)

WORLD WRESTLING ALLIANCE HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: THE ICON
(December 7, 1996; from East L.A. Angel; Woodbury, NJ)

WORLD WRESTLING ALLIANCE TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: THE HIMALAYAN PLAYERS
(December 7, 1996; won tournament; Woodbury, NJ)

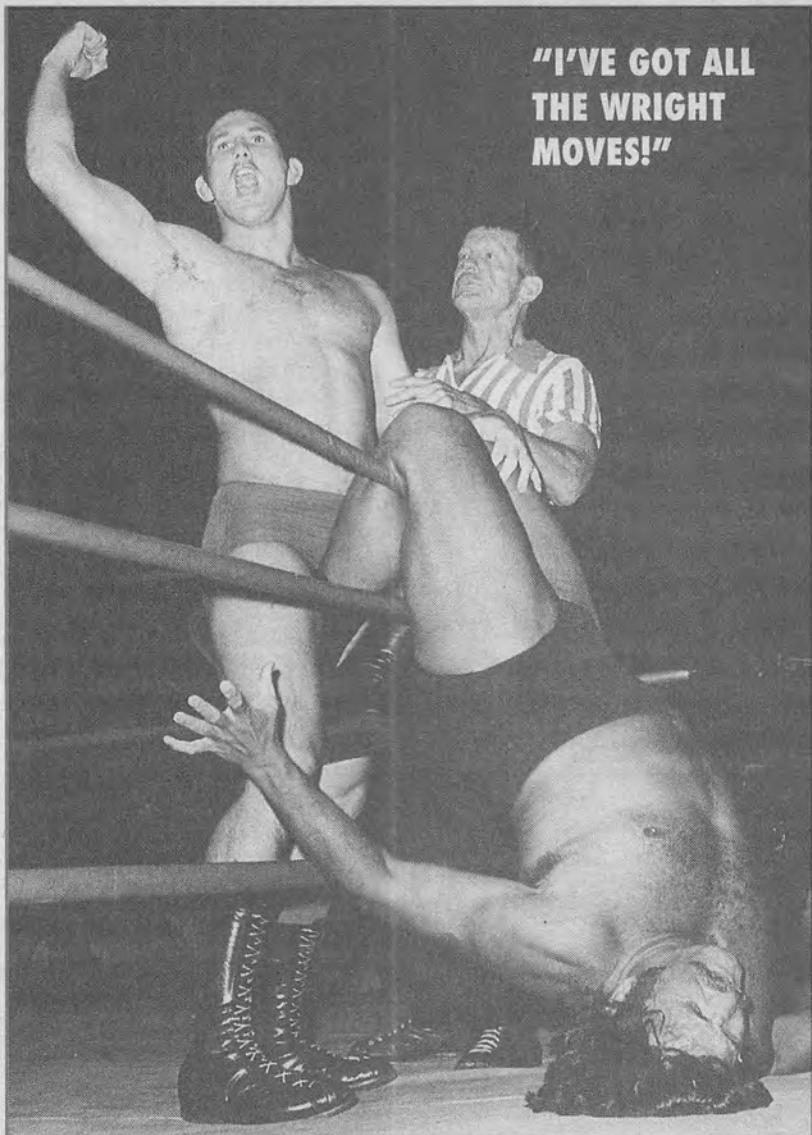
WWF INTERCONTINENTAL CHAMPION: OWEN HART
(April 28, 1997; from Rocky Maivia; Omaha, NE)

WWF WORLD CHAMPION: THE UNDERTAKER
(March 23, 1997; from "Psycho" Sid Vicious; Chicago, IL)

WWF WORLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: STEVE AUSTIN & SHAWN MICHAELS
(May 26, 1997; from Owen Hart & Davey Boy Smith; Evansville, IN)

BLAST FROM THE PAST

This Month In Wrestling History

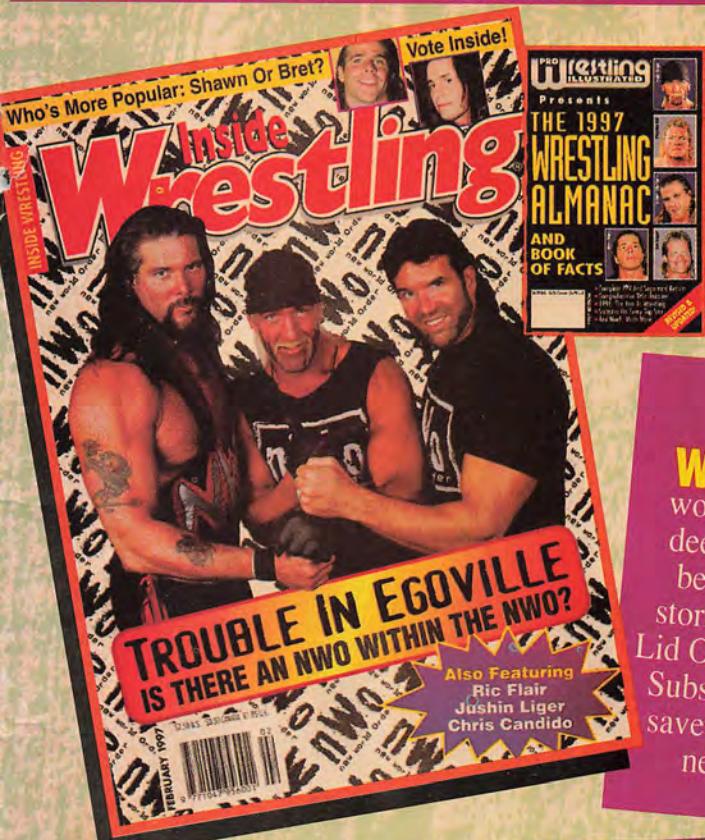


STEVEN WRIGHT vs. DALE LEWIS

October 1974

Just how young is Alex Wright? So young that when this picture of his father getting the best of Dale Lewis during a match in Los Angeles was taken, he didn't even exist! Young Alex arrived in WCW three years ago at age 18. You might notice a little resemblance to Alex in his father's face. Steven also used a style similar to the one his son uses today, though we're not sure Mr. Wright approves of his Alex's decision to turn rulebreaker.

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